DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 333 614 EC 300 365

TITLE Disabled Student Access to Postsecondary Education: Update. Report and Recommendations. 1991--Report 3.
INSTITUTION Florida State Postsecondary Education Planning Commission, Tallahassee.
PUB DATE 21 Feb 91
NOTE 77p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Accessibility (for Disabled); *Access to Education; Attitudes; Career Counseling; *Disabilities; Educational Planning; Educational Policy; Employment Potential; Higher Education; Needs Assessment; Policy Formation; Postsecondary Education; State Legislation; State Programs
IDENTIFIERS *Florida

ABSTRACT

This report examines progress made as well as strategies and programs that promote the postsecondary education and employability of Florida's disabled citizens. Data suggest that less than 1.0% of university students in Florida are reported disabled, while 1.2% of students at the State's community colleges are disabled and 5.9% of school district postsecondary students are disabled. Barriers to educational access include inadequate transportation, funding mechanisms, job opportunities, inaccessible facilities, and attitudes of personnel. Increased funding for the Auxiliary Learning Aids Program is recommended, as is increased commitment by postsecondary institutions to effective career advisement and development of linkages with community job sites. Also recommended is a State-level position to provide information and serve as a focal point for promoting disabled student access and improved data collection on disabled postsecondary students. Twenty-three specific recommendations are offered which address the following areas: statewide coordination of disabled student services; institutional resources and services for disabled students; barriers to disabled student access; employment opportunities; career advisement at community colleges and universities; and resources for disabled students. Appendixes include tables, the disabled student questionnaire and results, and a listing of selected statewide resources for the disabled. (DB)

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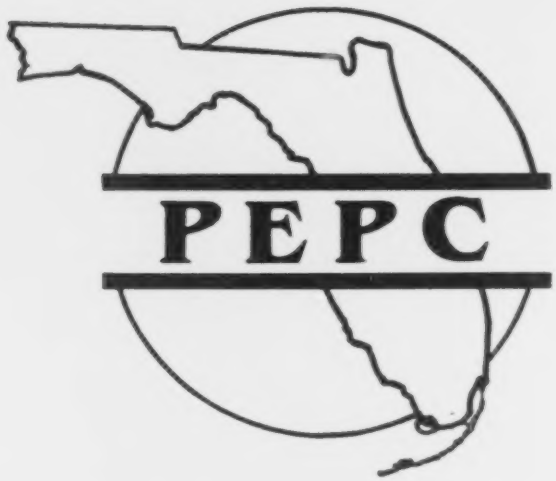

DISABLED STUDENT ACCESS TO POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION: UPDATE

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Report and Recommendations of the Postsecondary Education Planning Commission

1991 - REPORT 3

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The Postsecondary Education Planning Commission, initially created by executive order in 1980 and subsequently given statutory authority (SS 240.145 and 240.147, Florida Statutes), serves as an advisory body to the State Board of Education on all postsecondary education matters. The Commission is composed of 11 members of the general public and one full-time student registered at a postsecondary education institution in Florida. Members are appointed by the Governor with the approval of three members of the State Board of Education and subject to confirmation by the Senate.

The major responsibility of the Commission is preparing and updating every five years a master plan for postsecondary education. The enabling legislation provides that the Plan "shall include consideration of the promotion of quality, fundamental educational goals, programmatic access, needs for remedial education, regional and state economic development, international education programs, demographic patterns, student demand for programs, needs of particular subgroups of the population, implementation of innovative educational techniques and technology, and the requirements of the labor market. The capacity of existing programs, in both public and independent institutions, to respond to identified needs shall be evaluated and a plan shall be developed to respond efficiently to unmet needs."

Other responsibilities include recommending to the State Board of Education program contracts with independent institutions; advising the State Board regarding the need for and location of new programs, branch campuses and centers of public postsecondary education institutions; reviewing public postsecondary education budget requests for compliance with the State Master Plan; and periodically evaluating the State's 28 regional coordinating councils for vocational education and adult general education.

Further information about the Commission, its publications, meetings and other activities may be obtained from the Commission office, 231 Collins Building, Department of Education, Tallahassee, Florida, 32399-0400; telephone (904) 488-7894.

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION PLANNING COMMISSION

DISABLED STUDENT ACCESS TO POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION: UPDATE

Prepared in Response to Specific Appropriation 634B
of the
1990 General Appropriations Act

1991 - Report 3

February 21, 1991

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 1990 Legislature directed the Postsecondary Education Planning Commission to update its 1986 "report on Disabled Persons in Postsecondary Education. The update shall identify progress made toward implementation of the recommendations in the report and shall identify strategies and programs that promote the postsecondary education and employability of Florida's disabled citizens." The study of disabled student access was assigned to the Program Committee by the Commission Chairman. Members of the Committee include Alan Fickett; Chairman, Ralph Hogges; Donald Kahn; and James Talley.

Disabled students have always participated in postsecondary education and training, yet recent federal and state legislation to improve disabled student access has increased the number of disabled students attending postsecondary institutions nationwide. A study compiled by the National Center for Education Statistics in 1987 revealed that 10.5 percent of all* postsecondary students reported having at least one of the following conditions: a specific learning disability, a visual handicap, hearing impairment or deafness, a speech disability, an orthopedic handicap, or a health impairment. Preliminary data provided by the Board of Regents reveal that less than one percent of university students in Florida are reported disabled. Disabled students at the state's 28 community colleges represent 1.2 percent of the student population while 5.9 percent of school district postsecondary students are disabled. Postsecondary students at the district level in Florida are enrolled in either job preparatory, job supplemental, or adult general education programs.

Common barriers to disabled student access still remain in Florida--inadequate transportation, funding mechanisms, job opportunities, inaccessible facilities--yet disabled students more frequently point to attitudinal barriers when assessing the campus climate of the 1990s. Lack of information and insensitivity among some professors, instructors, and other postsecondary personnel can limit disabled students' educational and employment opportunities.

Financial resources for disabled students are available from a variety of federal and state programs administered by the departments of Labor and Education. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and the Division of Blind Services (DBS) administer eligibility programs that assist disabled persons to become employable. Education and training can be a part of the employment objective of disabled clients. The Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act Amendments of 1990 authorizes school districts and community colleges to use federal funds to support vocational programs and services for disabled and disadvantaged students. In addition, Florida has a unique funding source, the Auxiliary Learning Aids program, which helps public universities and community colleges provide academic aids and support services for disabled students. Another resource program, the Zollie M. Maynard, Sr., Education for Handicapped Adults Act, provides that school districts or community colleges offering adult general education, vocational preparatory and job preparatory programs are eligible to receive increased weighted funding for disabled students enrolled in those programs.

**Includes students enrolled at all public and private postsecondary institutions.*

The growing number of disabled postsecondary students in Florida has stretched federal and state funding sources to the maximum. Therefore, the Commission supports increased funding for the Auxiliary Learning Aids program and careful monitoring of other funding sources for disabled postsecondary students. Regardless of additional funding sources, postsecondary institutions are legally responsible for providing all reasonable accommodations, including auxiliary learning aids for disabled students. This reality necessitates a strong commitment by postsecondary institutions to allocate limited resources and services to disabled students in the most cost effective, creative, and equitable manner possible.

Career opportunities for disabled students who graduate from a postsecondary educational or training program are limited. Statistics reveal that nationwide, two-thirds of disabled Americans of working age are unemployed. Fifty-five percent of Floridians with a work disability were unemployed because of their disability in 1980. Advocates for the disabled estimate that the figure will remain constant in the 1990s unless employment and career opportunities increase for disabled workers. Underemployment among highly educated or skilled disabled persons is also a problem that is not reflected in the general unemployment statistics. Postsecondary institutions must make a concerted effort to provide effective career advisement to disabled students and to make the necessary linkages with business, industry, and government to increase hiring among qualified disabled students.

There are several state offices in Florida that are responsible for ensuring civil rights compliance for all protected classes, but there is no statewide office or position charged solely with providing technical assistance and information to postsecondary institutions on issues, policies, and laws related to disabled student access. A growing number of postsecondary personnel have expressed concern over a lack of statewide guidance, coordination, and advocacy for disabled students. Coordinators for disabled student services at the 37 public postsecondary institutions have noted repeatedly that there is a need for a state level position to provide information on a variety of issues and to serve as a focal point for promoting disabled student access.

Currently data on disabled postsecondary students are reported in the most preliminary manner. While institutions must avoid the temptation to label students who prefer not to reveal or document their disability, it is possible to obtain an accurate demographic profile of Florida's disabled postsecondary population without violating any student's right to privacy. Without an accurate profile of disabled students, institutions cannot target their resources to effectively accommodate the needs of students with a wide and changing variety of disabilities. To help all postsecondary institutions provide equal access and opportunity for disabled postsecondary students, the Commission has identified the following recommendations:

1. **A position with responsibility for Postsecondary Disabled Student Access and Programming should be designated or created in the Department of Education.** Location of the position should be at a level that would permit interaction with representatives of each of the divisions and educational delivery systems. This position should be filled by a person with academic preparation and experience in the policy issues, legal requirements, and learning needs of postsecondary disabled students. Responsibilities of this position would

include determining the affect on disabled students of proposed state policies, providing technical assistance to institutions in the training of staff and delivery of disabled student services and programs, and serving as the statewide focal point and advocate for disabled postsecondary students.

2. **To gather and maintain accurate data on disabled postsecondary students, the Florida Board of Regents should update its student data base to coincide with the functional disability categories used by the State Board of Community Colleges.** All public vocational technical centers, community colleges, and universities should annually report the number of self-identified disabled students by category to their respective sector board. Institutions should provide opportunities for students to identify a disability or need for institutional services at various points of contact such as during orientation or registration. Information regarding the availability of academic aids, disabled student services, or special classroom provisions should be included in post-admissions correspondence to students and in course syllabi.

3. **Public postsecondary institutions should report information on disabled students by the correct functional category or code.** Grouping disabled students into the category "disabled, but not categorized" should be avoided whenever possible.

4. **The Statewide Coordinator for Disabled Student Access, and the Equal Educational Opportunity Program Coordinators for the Board of Regents, State Board of Community Colleges, and Department of Education should initiate articulation efforts with high school guidance counselors throughout the State to encourage disabled students to attend postsecondary institutions.** Information on services and programs for postsecondary disabled students should be provided by these offices to principals, counselors, participants in the teachers-as-advisors program, and other faculty.

5. **The Bureau of Career Development should expand its computerized counseling component, MICROCHOICES, to identify by postsecondary institution the following information: the phone number of the disabled student services coordinator, confirmation of academic adaptive devices available to disabled students, confirmation of the existence of a multi-disciplinary center for learning disabled students and the phone number, and confirmation of the availability of disabled student housing and parking.** The Bureau should determine the most effective means of making MICROCHOICES available to sight impaired high school and community college students.

6. **All public postsecondary institutions should hire disabled student coordinators who are trained and experienced in providing disabled student services and interpreting laws and policies that affect disabled students and employees.** Institutions should include these coordinators in all planning and policy making activities that affect disabled students and

employees. Committees designed to improve disabled student access, retention, and employment should meet on a regular basis and include various components of the institutional community.

7. **All public community colleges, universities and vocational-technical centers should provide ongoing opportunities to increase institutional awareness of disabilities and knowledge of disabled student issues, including instructional and classroom accommodation procedures, legal access requirements, and local, state, and institutional resources and services.**

8. **The Statewide Coordinator for Postsecondary Disabled Student Access should host a joint meeting of disabled student coordinators from all public and private postsecondary institutions in Florida to develop systemwide intervention strategies, services, and programs that should be provided for disabled students.** Information gathered from other states and from the Florida A & M Learning Development and Evaluation Center should be considered when adapting systemwide policies and procedures for learning disabled students. As a minimum, each institution should provide ongoing information sessions or seminars on learning disabled postsecondary students to incoming faculty, teaching assistants, administrators, and counselors.

9. **The five existing university multi-disciplinary centers currently established and funded to serve school age disabled children should be eligible for support to include services for postsecondary adults in need of testing for learning disabilities.** The Learning Development and Evaluation Center at Florida A&M University should also be eligible for such support. One or more of the centers should provide in-service training for postsecondary personnel such as disabled student coordinators and counselors who provide direct services for disabled postsecondary students. The need for additional funding to provide such services should be based on a cost analysis provided by a committee composed of the center directors and the Statewide Coordinator for Postsecondary Disabled Student Access.

10. **Facilities and planning personnel at each public postsecondary institution should provide the disabled student coordinator or other designated individual with all plans for new construction or renovation projects to be reviewed for compliance with federal and state building codes and accessibility laws.** The Statewide Coordinator for Disabled Student Access should serve as a link between public postsecondary institutions and the Board of Regents and the Department of Education's Office of Educational Facilities during all phases of construction and major remodeling.

11. **To provide input on the transportation needs of disabled postsecondary students, disabled student coordinators at each public postsecondary institution should work closely with, or**

serve on, the local transportation coordinating board established pursuant to Section 427.0157, Florida Statutes. Disabled student coordinators should monitor the purchase of transportation vehicles by their institutions to ensure compliance with provisions of the Americans With Disabilities Act and to provide input on the transportation needs of disabled postsecondary students.

12. **All school districts and community colleges offering vocational job preparatory programs should report placement data on disabled completers to their respective sector boards.** Data on disabled placements should be reported in a separate category but included in the same report with other program information.

13. **The Florida Legislature should authorize an outcome incentive program to provide funds to school districts and community colleges that document increases in the placement of disabled job preparatory completers in job related occupations.** Funds should be used to buy adaptive equipment, materials, and aids for job preparatory programs and for outreach and recruitment efforts among disabled students.

14. **School districts should report data on disabled students enrolled in all postsecondary vocational programs by specific exceptionality code or category.** Data bases used by the Division of Public Schools and the Division of Vocational, Adult and Community Education should contain the same or comparable exceptionality codes.

15. **School districts and community colleges should make every effort to mainstream disabled students into regular vocational and academic programs.** This does not include programs for the severely emotionally or mentally disabled who might be shown to benefit from separate education and training, nor does it include specific job training programs that have been successful in placing disabled students in related meaningful employment.

16. **All public postsecondary institutions in Florida should provide the necessary training for career advisement personnel to allow them to provide effective advisement to disabled students, including evaluation of the students' abilities, interests, and aptitudes; realistic information about employment trends and opportunities in the current job market; and examples of coping strategies and adaptations used by successful disabled people working in various careers.** Career counselors should make every effort to establish linkages with local, state, and nationwide businesses and industries that provide employment opportunities for disabled workers and encourage such policies among those that do not. Career counselors at postsecondary institutions should work closely with public and private agencies that provide career counseling and services to disabled citizens.

17. **The Legislature should increase the 1991-92 appropriation for the Auxiliary Learning Aids program to reflect the increased number of postsecondary disabled students enrolled in public institutions and in need of auxiliary learning aid assistance.** The appropriation should reflect the increase in the number of students served by the program since its inception and the corresponding increase in the price of mechanical and human adaptive aids.

18. **To maximize limited resources and provide academic learning aids in as equitable a manner as possible, public postsecondary institutions must develop alternative methods of providing individual human services to every disabled student.** For example, students needing interpreters could be assigned to the same section, particularly for core courses.

19. **To ensure that institutions commit a reasonable amount of funds to provide disabled student access, and to distribute funds from the Auxiliary Learning Aids program in as equitable a manner as possible, each public postsecondary institution should provide at least 30 percent in matching funds to be eligible for reimbursement from the ALA program.** This match should begin with the 1991-92 academic year and increase to a 40 percent match by the 1996-97 academic year. To help determine the amount of ALA funds each institution receives, the Department of Education should factor in the institution's ALA allocation for the previous year, the institutional contribution, and the total number of disabled students served.

20. **The Department of Education's Postsecondary Education Policy Unit should compile a list of the equipment and aids purchased by institutions with auxiliary learning aid funds, institutional funds, and funds provided by other agencies.** The Department should maintain annual data on the unduplicated number of students who receive support from the ALA by institution.

21. **Funds from the Auxiliary Learning Aids program should be available to postsecondary disabled students enrolled in all vocational classes awarding either an Associate of Science Degree or a certificate consisting of college credits.** Disabled students enrolled in non-credit vocational or academic programs are eligible for support from Carl Perkins funds and should not be eligible to participate in the ALA program. The State Board of Education should clarify eligibility criteria in rule.

22. **The Division of Vocational, Adult and Community Education (DVACE) should carefully monitor the compliance plans of districts and community colleges receiving funds from the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act Amendments of 1990 to ensure that services and programs for disabled students receive priority attention.**

23. **The Division of Vocational, Adult and Community Education (DVACE) should carefully monitor district plans for participation in the Zollie M. Maynard, Sr. Education for Handicapped Adults program.** Community colleges should work with DVACE to ensure that eligible students in all parts of the State receive equitable vocational training opportunities.

I. INTRODUCTION

In proviso language accompanying Specific Appropriation 634B, the Postsecondary Education Planning Commission was directed to update its 1986 "report on Disabled Persons in Postsecondary Education. The update shall identify progress made toward implementation of the recommendations in the report and shall identify strategies and programs that promote the postsecondary education and employability of Florida's disabled citizens."

Although they are in the vast minority, the number of disabled students in postsecondary education nationwide has risen substantially over the last two decades. A study compiled by the National Center for Education Statistics in 1987 revealed that 10.5 percent of all postsecondary students reported having at least one of the following conditions: a specific learning disability, a visual handicap, hearing impairment or deafness, a speech disability, an orthopedic handicap, or a health impairment.

Data on disabled postsecondary students in Florida are not complete, however, information provided by the State Board of Community Colleges and the Board of Regents reveals that 7,623 self-identified disabled students attended public postsecondary institutions during 1989-90. In addition, there were another 1,293 postsecondary disabled students enrolled in district vocational job preparatory programs and over 19,000 disabled students enrolled in adult general education classes in Florida.*

Federal and state laws that enhance educational opportunities for persons with disabilities have reduced some of the barriers to postsecondary training and education. In addition, resources are available from a variety of joint federal and state programs that provide financial assistance to qualified disabled students. Florida has a unique funding source, the Auxiliary Learning Aids program, which helps public universities and community colleges provide academic aids and support services for disabled students. The growing number of postsecondary disabled students has increased the demand for state and institutional resources to provide appropriate services, programs, and accommodations.

The last decade has witnessed a large influx of disabled students into the postsecondary arena, yet barriers to accessible facilities, transportation, financial aid, and successful intervention strategies still remain. In addition, lack of awareness among some faculty and institutional personnel affects equality of access and opportunity for disabled postsecondary students. Just as disabled services and programs vary at Florida's postsecondary education institutions, so does awareness and implementation of the laws affecting disabled students.

Employment for disabled Americans with any educational attainment is abysmal. Nationwide, two-thirds of disabled citizens are unemployed. This percentage is higher among certain demographic groups. Seventy percent of black disabled women are unemployed. In Florida, 9.5 percent of all people of working age (18-64) are disabled. According to the 1980 Census, 584,660 Floridians reported having a work related disability. Of that number, 320,316 (55%) were prevented from working because of their disability. Underemployment of disabled Americans with postsecondary training or education is also a serious problem in Florida and throughout the country.

**Duplicated headcount, as some students reported more than one disability.*

To direct this study, the Commission Chairman created a Program Committee consisting of Commission members Dr. Alan Fickett, Chairman; Dr. Ralph Hogges; Mr. Donald Kahn; and Mr. James Talley. As part of the background research, Commission staff met with appropriate personnel from the Legislature, the Board of Regents, the State Board of Community Colleges, the Department of Education, the Department of Labor, Division of Vocational and Rehabilitative Services, and Florida public postsecondary institutions. In addition, a technical advisory group comprised of persons involved with services and programs for disabled Floridians was established to help staff clarify the direction of the study and to pinpoint key issues.

A survey was distributed to disabled students via the disabled student coordinator at five community colleges and three universities. The survey was designed to help determine the effectiveness of existing programs and services for disabled students and to measure the level of student satisfaction with institutional policies affecting disabled students. A total of 140 students completed the survey. Commission staff conducted four on-site visits to interview disabled student services personnel and students and to observe a variety of disabled student services and programs. In addition, staff reviewed information on disabled student services and programs provided by other states.

To aid in its analysis of disabled student accesses to postsecondary education, the Commission held seven public meetings to allow for individual, institutional, and agency input. A preliminary draft of recommendations was discussed by the Program Committee at its January 23 meeting. The Committee presented a final report to the Commission on February 21, 1991 for action and transmittal to the Legislature and State Board of Education by March 1, 1991.

II. DISABILITIES AND POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

Opportunities are expanding for postsecondary education, career options, and life choices for people with disabilities. During the last two decades, disabled student participation in postsecondary education increased for a variety of reasons, including awareness among disabled people, emergence of advocacy groups for individuals with disabilities, and the enactment of federal and state legislation to further and protect the rights of disabled Americans. People who by birth, illness, or accident have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities are disabled. Major life activities include caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working. There are an estimated 43 million disabled people in the United States. Over 1.3 million disabled students are enrolled in postsecondary institutions nationwide. Nevertheless, during Congressional hearings in 1990, Congress found that "discrimination against individuals with disabilities persists in such critical areas as employment, housing, public accommodations, education, transportation, communication, recreation, institutionalization, health services, voting, and access to public services."

Federal Policies for Disabled Individuals

In order to provide "clear, strong, consistent, enforceable standards addressing discrimination against individuals with disabilities," Congress enacted the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) on July 26, 1990. Proponents described the new Act as "the world's first comprehensive declaration of equality for people with disabilities." While the law specifically extends protection against discrimination in employment, public transportation, accommodations, and telecommunications, its effects will be felt in education as well. Although higher education institutions are already enforcing accessibility laws that apply to all institutions receiving federal funds, disabled advocates say that compliance with those laws has been mixed. The new legislation will give disabled people more protection and will require postsecondary institutions to expand some existing services to adhere to the law.

The ADA is the latest of several pieces of legislation that have sought to extend the rights of disabled persons into every segment of American life. Educational opportunities, one of the most fundamental rights of the disabled, have been broadly addressed in several pieces of federal legislation beginning in 1973. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 was the first comprehensive federal response to the state of the nation's disabled citizens. Section 504 of the Act and the implementing Regulations and Amendments require access and participation for all "qualified handicapped individuals" in postsecondary education, training, and employment programs that receive federal funds. A "qualified individual with a handicap" is one who, with respect to postsecondary and vocational education services, "meets the academic and technical standards requisite to admission or participation in the recipient's education program or activity."

The Rehabilitation Act prohibits any federally assisted institution, public or private, from barring disabled persons from admission to institutions or programs solely because of their disabilities, or from imposing quotas or giving admissions tests that have "a disproportionate, adverse effect on handicapped persons." Moreover, the Act's regulations bar postsecondary institutions from asking prior to admission whether an applicant has a disability. After a student

is admitted, however, the institution may make confidential inquiry concerning disabilities.

According to the Rehabilitation Act, all existing postsecondary facilities must "as a whole" be made accessible to disabled students. All buildings constructed after the law went into effect must be designed and constructed in such a manner that the facility is readily accessible to and usable by disabled persons. Disabled students are also entitled to "convenient and accessible" campus housing at the same cost as provided to other students.

Discrimination against disabled students in counseling, placement, student government and activities, educational programs, physical education, athletics, financial aid, and student employment is also prohibited. Postsecondary institutions must "adopt grievance procedures that provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints." In addition to the provisions listed above, the regulations impose obligations upon postsecondary programs to provide auxiliary learning aids to disabled students in order to accommodate disabilities. Institutions receiving federal aid are required to "take such steps which are necessary to ensure that no handicapped student is denied the benefits of, excluded from participation in, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under the education programs or activities operated by the recipient because of the absence of auxiliary learning aids for students with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills." Examples of auxiliary learning aids are: taped texts, interpreters, or other effective methods of making orally delivered materials available to students with hearing impairments, readers in libraries for students with visual impairments, classroom equipment adapted for use by students with manual impairments, and other similar services and actions.

In 1975 Congress passed the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in 1990. In this legislation, specific standards were set to provide for a "free appropriate education" for all disabled children. Each disabled child must be provided with a written individualized education program which describes the school district's plan for an appropriate education for the student. Schools must provide related services such as transportational, developmental, corrective, and supportive services. Concerned that students were leaving high school with no work skills, Congress mandated in 1990 that by age 16, disabled students' individualized education programs must include transition services. To make the transition to adult life smoother, schools will have to link with other public agencies, provide job training, or set postsecondary educational goals if appropriate. Currently only a small minority (15 percent) of disabled students who complete high school continue on to postsecondary education, and less than 50 percent who leave or complete high school find employment.

State Policies for Disabled Individuals

In an effort to ensure equality of access and opportunity within the state system of public education, the 1984 Florida Legislature created Section 228.2001, Florida Statutes, the Florida Educational Equity Act. The statute and accompanying rules parallel and complement Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The Florida law provides that "no person in this state shall, on the basis of race, national origin, sex, handicap, or marital status, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity conducted by a public education institution which receives or benefits from federal or state financial

assistance." This legislation reinforces the Florida Human Rights Act of 1977 (Section 760.10, F.S.) which prohibits discrimination in the areas of housing, employment, and training.

As a result of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act, the term "reasonable accommodation" has come to include what postsecondary institutions must provide disabled students as well as employees. Reasonable accommodation is applicable to many areas of institutional activity. A program accommodation is the modification of an academic program to allow the participation of a disabled student. Section 240.152, F.S. provides that any person who is hearing impaired, visually impaired, or dyslexic or who has a specific learning disability shall be eligible for reasonable substitution for any requirement for admission to a state university, community college, or postsecondary vocational institution where documentation can be provided that the person's failure to meet the admission requirement is related to the disability. Section 240.153, F.S. provides for reasonable substitution for any requirement for graduation, for admission into a program of study, or for entry into the upper division, where documentation can be provided that the person's failure to meet the requirement is related to the disability, and where the failure to meet the graduation requirement or program admission requirement does not constitute a fundamental change in the nature of the program. Both sector boards have adopted rules to implement this statute.

Provision of accommodations for disabled students during examinations ensures that any examination provides the same measures of the disabled students' mastery of the material as those for non-disabled students. Occasionally, all that is necessary is a different setting such as having the test read aloud for a blind student or offering it on audio tape. Other accommodations, however, may involve alternative means of evaluating learning, as in substituting multiple choice answers for essays. It may be necessary to extend the time of examinations for some disabilities.

Test administration procedures for disabled students taking the College-Level Academic Skills Test (CLAST) are outlined in Rule 6A-10.0311(5). According to the rule, any person required to take the CLAST will be deemed to have satisfied the requirement if the test "has not been modified in administration to ensure that the performance of the person on the subtest accurately reflects the person's achievement of the skill being measured, rather than the person's impaired abilities." Examples offered for test modifications are flexible scheduling and settings, varied methods of recording test answers, revised formats, and use of auditory aids.

Students with a learning disability may appeal to a special committee at the institutional level for a waiver of one or more sections of the examination. Section 240.107(5), Florida Statutes provides that "any student who in the best professional opinion of the university has a specific learning disability such that he cannot demonstrate successful completion of one or more sections of the College-Level Academic Skills Test (CLAST) and is achieving at the college level in every area except that of the disability" may appeal for a waiver.

First-time-in-college applicants to public community colleges must be tested prior to the completion of registration. These placement tests are often the first stumbling block for college bound learning disabled (LD) students. Individual institutions are responsible for determining what testing accommodations will be made for entering disabled students.

Resources for Disabled Student Access

Many postsecondary disabled students turn to the following agencies or programs for educational assistance. Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) is the nationwide federal-state program for assisting eligible disabled persons to become employable. Education and training at a vocational school, college, or university can be a part of the employment objective of individual clients. As specified in law, federal funds comprise 80 percent of vocational rehabilitation resources and the states provide the remaining 20 percent. All fifty states participate in vocational rehabilitation programs.

The nature and scope of rehabilitative services may vary from state to state. In some states there are two agencies: a general agency and one for persons who are legally blind. This is true in Florida where the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) is located in the Department of Labor, and the Division of Blind Services (DBS) is housed within the Department of Education. Examples of services provided by VR and DBS are: tuition, books, tutors, readers, and other adaptive aids. The VR expenditures for disabled postsecondary students during the 1989-90 school year was $532,338.* The Division of Blind Services expended $271,088 for disabled postsecondary student services during 1989-90.

Both VR and Blind Services are eligibility programs rather than entitlement programs. To receive rehabilitation funds, individuals must experience a disability that is a substantial handicap to employment, and they must have potential for employment as a result of rehabilitation services. Eligibility is determined by a state rehabilitation counselor based on criteria in the state approved VR plan. Not all educational plans are approved by a VR counselor. A client's participation in postsecondary education must relate directly to enhancing that individual's job potential.

The Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984 authorizes school districts and community colleges to use federal funds to support vocational programs and services for disabled students. The allocation of federal funds for vocational education for disabled students is determined for each institution on the basis of a funding formula established by the federal government. Until recently, set-aside funds (10 percent of all Carl Perkins funds) were earmarked for the support of disabled student programs. In 1990 the Carl Perkins Act was reauthorized as the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act Amendments and was restructured to reflect Congress' desire for vocational education to become more technologically oriented nationwide. At the same time, the new law requires that priority for funds be given to local sites (districts or community colleges) that have the highest concentration of disadvantaged and disabled populations.

Each institution applying for Carl Perkins funding must submit an application for review by the appropriate state agency that meets the following eligibility requirements: the plan must provide a description of how the vocational education programs will ensure full participation of individuals who are members of a special population, describe how the needs of those individuals will be assessed, and explain how quality programs will be provided. Each institution must report the number of disadvantaged, disabled, and limited English proficient students that will be served. The Act requires on-going cooperative interagency planning efforts at the state and local levels to encourage institutions to

**Expenditures per student are unavailable.*

implement vocational programs and services that meet the needs of disabled individuals. While the Division of Vocational, Adult and Community Education will provide technical assistance to districts and community colleges that receive Perkins funding, the State has no authority to use any type of sanction against institutions that do not allow their approved plan. In Florida, the multi-agency State Council on the Vocational Education of the Handicapped addresses the special needs of disabled students on a statewide basis. At the local level, interagency councils serve a variety of purposes including long range planning to meet the needs of students with disabilities.

Since 1979 the Florida Legislature has appropriated general revenue funds to support the Department of Education's Auxiliary Learning Aids (ALA) program. The program assists public universities and community colleges in providing auxiliary learning aids to disabled postsecondary students and is administered by the Department of Education's Postsecondary Education Policy Analysis and Development Unit. In accordance with State Board of Education rules, auxiliary learning aids funds are to be awarded to institutions as reimbursement for eligible expenditures made for disabled students. To receive services provided by auxiliary learning aid funds, students must first exhaust their eligibility or be found ineligible for other federal or state sources of assistance for program services. Institutional reimbursement may not exceed $5,500 per student in each academic year. The state appropriation for the program for 1990-91 is 1.3 million dollars. All 37 public colleges and universities currently receive funds from the Auxiliary Learning Aids program. Institution participation is contingent upon providing matching funds of at least 20 percent. Some institutions match at a higher percentage than others (Table 1, Appendix A). The limited funds available for the ALA do not negate institutional responsibility for offering whatever auxiliary learning aids are necessary to provide equal educational access for disabled students; however, the services and auxiliary learning aids provided by Florida's postsecondary institutions vary considerably throughout the State.

The Zollie M. Maynard, Sr., Education for Handicapped Adults Act was enacted in 1989 and funded by the 1990 Legislature. School districts or community colleges offering adult general education and vocational job preparatory courses are eligible to receive increased weighted funding for disabled students enrolled in those programs. Participating sponsors must develop a plan to submit to the Department of Education for approval. The local sponsor must include a statement of need and verification of certain criteria including program descriptions and individual student plans. Currently only school districts have submitted the necessary plans to participate in the Zollie Maynard Act.

While disabled students are encouraged to apply for all regular sources of student financial aid, no state-supported special scholarship programs have been implemented for disabled students. Existing state financial aid programs require that students maintain a full-time (12 hours) academic schedule. Many disabled students cannot meet this requirement because of the extra time needed to spend with interpreters and tutors. The Division of Blind Services, however, requires that students receiving support from that agency maintain a 15 hour academic schedule. Students who receive aid from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation must maintain a 12 hour academic schedule. Federal student loans and grants are available to part-time students who are disabled.

Disabled Student Data

Data on disabled school age children are available from the federal government and each state department of education. According to the latest statistics, 4,127,568 disabled children nationwide between the ages of 6 and 21 were served under state and federal handicapped educational programs. (Students over the age of 18 included in these figures were enrolled in secondary programs.) It is important to note that these figures include mentally retarded (14.6 percent) and emotionally disturbed (9.1 percent) students who are not usually considered potential postsecondary students. According to the **Eleventh Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation of the Education of the Handicapped Act**, 47 percent of the nation's school-aged disabled students were classified as learning disabled in 1988. In Florida public schools, 11.5 percent of all school children were reported as disabled in 1989. Of this number 42 percent (86,000) were classified as learning disabled.

Nationwide, 60 percent of disabled students exit the secondary educational system with either a diploma or a certificate, yet only 15 percent of those students enroll in postsecondary education. Approximately eight percent attend vocational/trade schools, five percent attend a community college, and two percent attend a four-year institution (Table 2). The U.S. Department of Education estimates the high school graduation rate for students as a whole to be 73 percent; of that number, 56 percent continue on to postsecondary education.

As previously mentioned, federal law prohibits institutions of higher learning from requiring disabled students to reveal a disability before they are admitted to a university or community college. Many disabled students will contact a disabled student services office after they have been accepted to an institution, while others will notify an institution of their disability during registration or orientation. Some disabled students never reveal their disability. According to the **Profile of Handicapped Students in Postsecondary Education, 1987**, 10.5 percent of all postsecondary students in the United States had at least one of the following disabling conditions: a specific learning disability, visual handicap, hearing impairment, deafness, speech disability, orthopedic handicap, or other health impairment (Table 3).

Major Functional Disability Areas

Learning Disabled Students

Increasing numbers of students with learning disabilities are attending American colleges and universities. Over 12 percent (160,878) of all postsecondary students with disabilities report that they are learning disabled (LD), according to the **Profile of Handicapped Students in Postsecondary Education, 1987**. Between 1983 and 1988, the number of students with learning disabilities enrolled in postsecondary institutions increased by 71 percent. Over 40 percent of the inquiries to HEATH (Higher Education and Adult Training for People with Handicaps) in 1987 were requests for information on learning disabilities. The number of children identified and specially educated in the public schools as learning disabled has grown from 800,000 in 1976 to nearly 2,000,000 in 1987-88, according to the **Eleventh Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation on the Education of the Handicapped Act**.

Several factors are responsible for the continued increase in participation of learning disabled people in postsecondary education: improved identification of

children who are learning disabled, provision of appropriate special education in elementary and secondary schools, and a growing awareness in postsecondary institutions that providing necessary support services for LD students may allow them to succeed in college, technical school, and beyond.

A learning disability is a permanent disorder that affects the manner in which individuals retain, process, and express information, not a form of mental retardation or emotional disorder. Most persons with learning disabilities are of average or above average intelligence. A quarter of learning disabled persons are classified as gifted.

Despite nationwide efforts to provide educational services for LD students, 36 percent age 16 and above (one in three) drop out before graduating from high school. Special educators note that a substantial number of LD students leave school before attaining the age of 16. Of the number of LD students who do graduate, a small percentage (17 percent) go on to postsecondary education or training. Along with emotionally disturbed, mentally retarded, and multi-handicapped students, LD students are less likely to attend postsecondary schools after high school graduation.

Of the 17 percent learning disabled students who do participate in postsecondary education, the majority of those students attend vocational technical centers and approximately one-third attend community colleges. The remainder go on to a four year university. According to some researchers, the small number of LD students who matriculate at a vocational center, community college, or university is partially attributable to the lack of preparation that LD students receive in high school for college work, the negative attitudes of college faculty members toward LD students, and the lack of trained support personnel on campuses to assist LD students.

In 1980, 50,036 students (3.3 percent of the student population) in Florida Public Schools (K-12) were classified as learning disabled. This figure increased to 86,000 (4.9 percent in 1989). In 1988-89, 34 percent of LD students age 16 and over dropped out of school, 32 percent (1,658) graduated with a standard diploma, 14 percent with a special diploma, 2 percent with a certificate, and 17 percent left school for an unknown reason.

In 1989-90, approximately 1,218 LD students (15 percent of all postsecondary disabled students) were reported enrolled at Florida public postsecondary institutions. According to the Disabled Student Survey conducted by the Commission, 35 percent of learning disabled students were diagnosed after enrolling at their institution. Many postsecondary LD students, particularly those who were undiagnosed in secondary school, drop out of college before they receive any services or academic aids.

In recent years, postsecondary campuses have intensified efforts to provide academic support services for all disabled students. Most colleges and universities provide academic remediation and tutoring as well as a variety of computer assisted learning devices geared to specific disabilities. Experts agree that no group of students require these services to a greater degree than the LD student. Most counselors and tutors assisting disabled students have little or no special training in the area of learning disabilities. In addition, some instructors have the misperception that learning disabled students are "lazy" or "stupid" and are reluctant to provide extra time for test taking or to allow notetakers or tutors to attend class with the LD student. While the

majority of postsecondary LD students attend vocational centers, they face a variety of comprehension and performance problems particularly in the highly technical training programs. Some vocational directors are wary of LD students who need special help in mastering complex tasks that involve health or safety risks.

For LD students who were identified in elementary or secondary schools and consequently received some special services, the transition to postsecondary education is difficult. For undiagnosed adults who go on to a college or university without confirmation of their disability, the problems and adjustments are intensified. Unlike those measurements and tools used for diagnosing children, there are no widely accepted or mandated measures for diagnosing adults with learning disabilities. Diagnostic testing of LD adults is such a new concept that there is little agreement over the type of methods or instruments used to gauge learning disabilities. At the same time, there is confusion over the persons qualified to administer and interpret intelligence (IQ) and diagnostic (achievement) tests. Some agencies serving the disabled use only licensed clinical psychologists (Ph.D.) to measure intellect and achievement while others use learning disabled specialists (BS) with specific training in test administration and evaluation. As with testing, services available for LD postsecondary students vary at institutions throughout the country.

Most postsecondary institutions refer students who have not been previously tested for a learning disability to a clinical psychologist for evaluation. The cost for a private diagnosis is expensive--$400 to $800. Institutions can refer students to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation for diagnosis; however, this approach can be very time consuming and not all individuals who are referred to vocational rehabilitation are accepted as clients.

In Florida, school age children can be tested for a variety of psychological and neurological disabilities at one of 18 centers operated by the Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resources System (FDLRS). These centers also provide in-service training and information to secondary teachers, counselors, and parents involved in the education of exceptional children. In addition, there are five multi-disciplinary centers located at three public and two private postsecondary institutions in Florida. These centers are funded with K-12 money and are currently serving school age children. Occasionally these centers will provide testing services for postsecondary students. The only center dedicated to LD postsecondary students in Florida is the Learning Development and Evaluation Center at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University. The Center is funded each year by the Legislature and provides diagnostic and tutoring services to LD students enrolled at the University as well as testing and pre-collegiate programs for area high school students.

As the number of postsecondary LD students increases, so must the availability of academic aids as well as diagnostic and developmental services. Florida disabled student coordinators cite the growing number of LD students as one of the biggest challenges they face in providing disabled student services.

Hearing Impairment

Loss of hearing is a complex disability, which is difficult to define. Approximately 18 million Americans were reported to be hearing impaired in 1984. According to the 1987 **Profile of Handicapped Students in Postsecondary Education**, over 26 percent of disabled students are either deaf or hard of hearing.

Nationwide, deaf students are more likely to continue on to postsecondary education than any other group of disabled students except those who are visually impaired. Just as the level of hearing impairment affects academic progress, the age of the onset of hearing loss is an important consideration in providing services for hearing impaired postsecondary students and has been shown to affect the development of reading skills. No correlation, however, has been shown with the level of math achievement.

Loss of hearing means a lifelong communication problem with difficulty in basic language development through speaking and listening means. These important distinctions are necessary for educators to recognize when providing services for hearing impaired students. When hearing impaired students enter postsecondary education, they have developed a communication skill in one of several learning methods. Three identified learning approaches to communication are oral, manual, and total. The supporters of the **Oral Approach** believe students can learn to communicate effectively using speech, speech reading, and auditory training to maximize use of residual hearing. The supporters of the **Manual Approach** believe that a combination of sign language and finger spelling should be used for expressive and receptive communication. A more recent refinement of the Manual Approach is called **Total Communication**, which implies acceptance, understanding, and use of all methods of communication. Proponents of this theory believe people with hearing impairments should be taught to communicate manually as well as to speak and speech read.

Since most hearing impaired students enter postsecondary education with the same concerns and aspirations as hearing students, a significant factor in determining their success is the availability and quality of support services. Services frequently provided are interpreters, notetakers, tutors, remedial programs, and technological devices.

An interpreter is a communicator using a mode of communication that has been designated by the hearing impaired student. This person is a facilitator between the student and others, but the interpreter does not enter the communication itself. Often it is difficult to obtain interpreters with the appropriate standard of proficiency. Although difficult, it is extremely important to match an interpreter's knowledge and competence with that of the student. The Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf has developed a certification process that can assist in identifying qualified individuals. Qualified interpreters are the most expensive auxiliary learning aid for disabled students. Disabled student coordinators in Florida note that it now costs $8,000 per academic year to provide an interpreter to a hearing impaired student.

Good notetaking assistance in the classroom is as important to a hearing impaired student as a good interpreter. It provides the student with a permanent record of the class content, while enabling the student to concentrate on the interpreter for immediate information. Some students employ trained notetakers, while others ask a classmate to share notes. In some cases, hearing impaired students rely on a tutor who knows the subject matter and is experienced in teaching the content to hearing impaired students.

Most hearing impaired students attend colleges or universities where they are mainstreamed into programs with hearing students. Some institutions have separate programs for hearing impaired students on their campuses. Gallaudet University in Washington D.C. and the National Technical Institute for the Deaf at the Rochester Institute of Technology in Rochester, N.Y. are totally separate

institutions for deaf undergraduate students supported by the federal government. Flagler College in St. Augustine, Florida is one of seven nationwide outreach centers that provides the educational resources of Gallaudet University to professionals working with hearing impaired or deaf students. Hearing impaired students are generally mainstreamed into regular academic or vocational settings. At North Florida Junior College in Madison, hearing impaired students attend summer college preparatory sessions before regular classes begin. At St. Petersburg Junior College, the Center for the Hearing Impaired provides a variety of support services for its students, including a four week summer preparation program designed to provide orientation, independent living skills training, and placement testing. Students are mainstreamed into the standard courses offered at the institution.

The 1990 Legislature added American Sign Language as an approved foreign language requirement for students completing a bachelor's degree at a Florida public university. There is a growing need for community college and university faculty who can sign during class lectures.

Visual Impairment

Visually impaired students depend on non-visual means of learning. A visual impairment may be caused by a physical diminution or loss of vision or inability to perceive what is viewed through the eye. A student with this impairment may not see or comprehend written material. Visual perceptual problems may include inability to discriminate figure/ground, sequencing and letter reversals, and similar shaped letters. Students may be unable to complete a standard answer sheet or write an essay in the usual manner. Visually impaired students frequently experience great difficulty in computation and other mathematical curricula because manipulation of numbers and figures is dependent upon visual recognition and interpretation. Nevertheless, among disabled high school completers, visually impaired students are the most likely (nationwide) to attend a postsecondary institution. They are also the most likely to attend a four-year institution.

Instructors can greatly facilitate the classroom learning of visually impaired students in a variety of ways. It is essential to describe in words that which they point out or demonstrate for visual students. Usually visually impaired students will need to handle materials for tactile interpretation. Audible switches and signals are important, and equipment must be stationary or its relocation made known to students.

Adaptations for visually impaired students have been successful in making it possible for visually impaired students to achieve in the academic arena. Their scores on standardized tests typically are comparable to those of sighted students. Electronic optical aids and braille-recorded editions of textbooks are examples of adaptations that can be used to provide access for visually impaired students.

Mobility Impairment

A disability that limits function of movement in any of the limbs or fine mobility is described as a mobility impairment. Impairments of this nature may involve limitations in accomplishing such activities as traveling to and entering classrooms, sitting for extended periods of time, manipulating test and learning

materials such as paper or pencils, writing and marking small answer ovals, or writing, computing, and transferring numbers to paper.

As a result of Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and Chapter 553, Part V, F.S., many postsecondary campus buildings and classrooms have been made accessible to students with mobility impairments. In Florida, new construction and major remodeling projects at community colleges and universities are subject to the standards and codes of the **Accessibility Requirements Manual** (Florida Board of Building Codes and Standards) and guidelines established in Part V of the Building Construction Standards, Chapter 553, F.S. New construction at community colleges is certified prior to opening by the Department of Education's Office of Educational Facilities. Construction and substantial improvements at public universities are inspected by the Board of Regent's (BOR) Office of the Associate Vice Chancellor, Budgets and Finance. According to Section 553.48(6), F.S., "Substantial improvement means any repair, alteration, reconstruction, or improvement of a structure, the cost of which equals or exceeds 50 percent of the structure..."

Despite state oversight, many disabled student coordinators contend that inaccessible buildings and facilities still limit access for physically impaired students, staff, and the general public. Older universities and colleges that utilize buildings and facilities built prior to the enactment of federal and state accessibility codes need to be particularly aware of barriers that might not be considered a major renovation project. For example, some student services such as registration, financial aid, and advisement are located on the second floor of buildings with elevators that are not wheelchair accessible or are frequently out of order. Some classroom laboratories have stationary, and thus inaccessible, work tables and areas. Some institutions operate buses and vans that are not accessible to wheel chairs. Occasionally, athletic and cultural events are held in arenas and facilities inaccessible to mobility impaired students. If a building or facility is not marked for major renovation, the individual institution must determine if inaccessible barriers need to be removed.

Often faculty members must work individually with mobility impaired students to ensure the accessibility of their classrooms and to provide sufficient time for the student to move about the room. It may be necessary to arrange for proctors to assist students with manipulation of test materials, marking exams, and writing numbers and/or symbols as directed by the students. In some cases, alternative methods of recording written material such as typing or taping may be necessary as well.

Simple devices can facilitate the learning of mobility impaired students. Folders, clamps, and rubber mats can prevent objects from moving. Equipment can be modified and larger typewriter and computer keyboards are available for those with unsteady movements. Transportation to and from campus continues to be a problem for mobility impaired students. Many students also find it difficult to maneuver around campus, particularly at those institutions with temporary classroom sites and older buildings and facilities.

<u>Speech Impairment</u>

Speech impairment is any disorder of language, articulation, fluency, or voice that interferes with communication, pre-academic or academic learning, vocational training, or social adjustment. Examples include, but are not limited to, the

following: cleft lip and/or palate with speech impairment, stammering, stuttering, laryngectomy, or aphasia. Speech impairment represents the second most frequent by disabling condition of K-12 disabled students. Only a small number of students with speech impairments attend postsecondary institutions. Approximately 63,000 postsecondary students (5 percent of all disabled students) reported having a speech disability in 1986.

Other Health Impairment

Other health impairment covers a wide variety of disabling conditions including, but not limited to, epilepsy, cancer, drug abuse, and Acquired Immune Deficiency (AIDS). Many students with health impairments do not need institutional assistance or special services. (Two other large functional categories, mental retardation and emotionally disturbed, are not generally considered in postsecondary data bases.)

The national **Profile of Handicapped Students in Postsecondary Education, 1987** revealed that regardless of their disability the majority of disabled postsecondary students attend school full-time (62.8 percent) are white (78.5 percent), and live off campus (55.2 percent). (Table 4) Seventy-five percent of the disabled students enrolled in the Fall of 1986 attended public institutions. Of that group, 37.2 percent matriculated at a community college; 22.1 percent attended a four year doctoral institution; 14.3 percent attended other four year institutions; and 1.4 percent attended less than two-year institutions (Table 5). Considering total enrollment in both the public and independent sectors, a larger proportion (12.9 percent) of students at private, for-profit schools reported that they had a disability than students at public institutions (10.6 percent) or students at private not-for-profit institutions (9.6 percent). (Table 6)

Postsecondary Students in Florida

Several means to collect data on all disabled postsecondary students in Florida have resulted in at least a partial profile of that population. Postsecondary institutions report to the Department of Education the number of disabled students who receive aid through the state's Auxiliary Learning Aids (ALA) program, while other disabled students are identified during registration or orientation. In 1989 the Commission conducted a survey of 1000 students at eight public postsecondary institutions. Of the 797 students who responded to the survey, 2.1 percent reported being disabled.

Based on data provided by the State Board of Community Colleges (SBCC), the Board of Regents (BOR), the Department of Education (DOE), and individual institutions, it is clear that the number of disabled students matriculating at the postsecondary level is increasing, particularly among certain types of disabilities. For instance, of the 1,341 disabled university students* reported in 1989-90, 484 of them were classified as LD. This number represents a 66 percent increase in the number of students reported in the LD category the previous year. The State Board of Community Colleges recently updated their student data base to include categories for disabled students. Data from the community colleges is preliminary, but according to SBCC data files, 6,201 disabled students were enrolled in Florida's 28 community colleges in Fall 1990. In addition, another 1,293 disabled postsecondary students were enrolled in district job preparatory vocational programs (Table 7). Over 19,000 disabled

**unduplicated headcount*

adults participated in adult general education programs offered by districts and colleges during 1988-89.

In addition to traditional-aged students (ages 17-24) a significant number of older disabled persons are represented in the population who are in need of postsecondary education and training. For instance, 66 percent of the nation's disabled citizens are unemployed. The largest number of unemployed disabled Americans are 45 years of age and older (69 percent are unemployed). Unemployment among disabled Americans varies by demographics. Women constitute 49 percent of all working age Americans with disabilities--and 53 percent of those unemployed (Table 8). Blacks represent 18 percent of all working age persons with disabilities, despite the fact that they constitute just 11.5 percent of the general population. Seventy percent of black disabled women are unemployed. For most disabled persons over 24, the disability is something that occurred after they had started to work. Postsecondary education for disabled students is not limited to the traditional age student, although most state and federal resources are spent on that age group.

Employment of Disabled Floridians

In Florida, there is no recent definitive data on the number of unemployed disabled people. Based on the 1980 Census, fifty-five percent of Floridians with a work disability were unemployed because of their disability. At the request of the Commission, the Florida Education Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP) recently tracked the employment record of 2,952 disabled students who had completed or left one of the state's vocational education for the handicapped programs in 1989. Of the 2,952 students who had completed or left the program, eight percent had worked the entire third quarter of 1989. Florida law does not require that districts or community colleges report the number of disabled job preparatory students who find or who do not find employment, so it is impossible to know how many former vocational students are actually working and in what capacity. Disabled students who complete an academic program at a community college or university are generally not tracked unless they are enrolled in a specific program such as the computer program for disabled students at Valencia Community College. Most government and private agencies working to increase employment opportunities for the disabled, such as the Governor's Alliance for Employment of Disabled Citizens, focus on vocationally oriented jobs. The Florida Developmental Disabilities Planning Council is a federally funded state planning and advocacy organization that works to optimize independent living and working opportunities for developmentally disabled Floridians. A developmental disability creates severe functional limitations in several basic life activities such as self-care, learning, and economic independence. Currently the Council is seeking proposals from the Community College System to provide local, institutionalized pre- and in-service training opportunities for job coaches and employment specialists who provide employment support services to persons with disabilities and to businesses that hire individuals with disabilities.

During 1985-1989, several educational and rehabilitative agencies worked together in **Project Transition** to develop a model process to assist students with disabilities make the transition from school to work or postsecondary education. As a result, 27 counties now have a comprehensive transition process, which includes an interagency committee on transition; individual transition plans; transition plan meetings with parents, educators, and agency representatives; a functional curricula with county-based work experience; and a follow-up system exit. Counties that have tracked students who participated in **Project Transition** found positive results. For instance, Martin County's employment rate among

project participants was 70 percent compared to the statewide figures of 25 percent found by Project Transition in 1986. Although transition planning is appropriate for any exceptional student who needs assistance with planning for the future, populations most often targeted are emotionally handicapped, educable mentally handicapped, severely mentally handicapped, profoundly handicapped, autistic, deaf-blind, students with specific learning disabilities and students with severe physical handicaps. Many of **Project Transition's** participants have supported employment situations and are not generally considered potential postsecondary students. Underemployment is a serious problem among disabled Floridians, particularly among those with postsecondary training or education.

Statewide Coordination of Postsecondary Disabled Students

All 37 public colleges and universities have a designated coordinator for disabled student services, there is no single state office currently providing policy, legal, and technical assistance to those coordinators. The Equal Educational Opportunity Program (EEOP) offices located in the Department of Education, the State Board of Community Colleges (SBCC), and the Board of Regents (BOR) are responsible for ensuring civil rights compliance for all protected classes. Heretofore, the state's resources have focused on ensuring minority access and retention. For instance, the university disabled student coordinators have met one time with the BOR equal opportunity programs director in the last three years. The community college disabled student coordinators have not met with their EEOP counterpart in over three years.

Despite mandates to provide access for disabled students, no systemwide data exists on the number of disabled students enrolled at public postsecondary institutions throughout the State. Although institutions have various means of collecting that data, neither the SBCC, or the BOR have collected reliable, consistent data on the numbers of disabled students enrolled at their institutions. No state office coordinates or provides information on the various public and private agencies that provide financial, transportation, diagnostic, or job placement assistance to disabled Floridians. No statewide plans to increase articulation between secondary and postsecondary disabled students exist. No statewide policy exists for diagnosing or providing services for LD students, although their numbers have grown faster than any other segment of the disabled student population.

As part of its ongoing equity responsibilities and services, the Department of Education's Equal Educational Opportunity Program Office (EEOP) reviews the Educational Equity Act Updates submitted annually by the 28 public community colleges and the 67 school districts. Based on these updates, the EEOP office identifies steps needed to ensure institutional compliance with the Florida Educational Equity Act. In addition, the EEOP provides a technical assistance manual to help all institutions follow the procedural reporting requirements.

The Florida Educational Equity Act (Section 228.2001, F.S.) prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, national origin, sex, handicap, or marital status against a student or an employee in the state system of public education. Each public institution is required to submit an annual plan to their respective governing board detailing their compliance with the intent of the Equity Act. The boards then submit their Educational Equity Act Update to the EEOP office. State universities submit their plans to the Board of Regents. As part of their ongoing equity reporting requirements, community colleges and universities submit a list of all the course substitutions required and granted or denied by disabled students during the year. The 1989 community college equity plan included

strategies adopted by each college to implement the recommendations contained in the Division of Community Colleges' Decade of Disabled Persons Report.

One major component of each institution's equity plan is the program analysis section. Each year, the Commissioner of Education designates certain academic programs for review to determine student participation by race, sex, disability, and limited English skills. The purpose of the program analysis is to identify the programs in which students of each of the subgroups are disproportionately enrolled. For each program, course, or activity having a disproportionate enrollment, the institution is required to develop strategies to increase the participation of those groups of students who are underrepresented. At the same time, institutions are required to monitor their admissions data and limited access program data to determine representation by protected classes. Institutions also submit data on financial aid participation and employment by race, sex, and handicap. According to the Board of Regents' EEOP office, data on disabled student participation in academic programs, limited access programs, and financial aid are not uniformly reported by state universities in their equity plan updates.

While institutions are required by Florida Law to submit their equity plans and include strategies for improving or removing barriers to equal access, neither the Board of Regents nor the Department of Education has any enforcement power to require institutions to adhere to their plans or to the Department's recommendations. Power to enforce compliance with any civil rights legislation lies with the United States Office of Civil Rights. The Florida Equity Act provides for an individual who is aggrieved by a violation of the law to seek relief by the court.

Special Resources for Disabled Postsecondary Students

All public postsecondary institutions provide special resources for disabled students. These resources consist of special services and adaptive equipment. In March 1990, the Senate Committee on Higher Education conducted a survey to determine what services were offered by postsecondary institutions to disabled students and to ascertain whether selected Commission recommendations from the **Master Plan Supplement** on Disabled Student Access had been implemented. The survey also solicited the views of disabled student coordinators on related questions. Twenty community colleges and seven universities responded to the survey. In the course of the current review, Commission staff sent the survey to all institutions that had not replied to the Senate. Responses were received from six community colleges and one university, bringing the overall response rate to 92 percent.

According to the survey, all but three of the community colleges provide notetakers and tutors to eligible disabled students. All state universities provide notetakers and three quarters of both community colleges and universities provide interpreters and readers. Over half of all institutions provide specific counseling and career information to disabled students while only five community colleges and one university provide diagnostic services. Ten community colleges and five universities responded that they provided help with registration, admissions, orientation, and financial aid. Seven community colleges and four universities reported that they promoted campus awareness of disabilities by providing information for faculty or campus community.

To determine the level of disabled student satisfaction with existing institutional resources, the Commission distributed a survey via the disabled

student coordinators at five community colleges and three universities (Appendix B). One hundred and forty completed surveys were returned. Thirty-five percent of the respondents were freshmen, 38 percent were working toward an Associate of Arts degree, while 25 percent were working toward a Bachelor of Arts. Fifty-four percent of the respondents were between the ages of 17 and 24, 66 percent were white, and 96 percent were in-state residents. Forty-nine percent of the disabled students were taking 12-15 credit hours a semester, while 38 percent were employed. According to the general student survey conducted in 1989 by the Commission, 60 percent of all students were taking 12-15 credit hours a semester, while 65 percent were employed.

More respondents (36 percent) indicated that they had a physical impairment than any other disability. Twenty-five percent had a hearing impairment. Twenty-nine percent of the respondents reported a learning disability; thirty-five percent of these students reported that they were diagnosed as LD after enrolling at their current institution.

The majority of respondents, 79 percent, required institutional assistance for their disability. Forty-four percent received support from the Auxiliary Learning Aids program, 38 percent from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, 16 percent from the Division of Blind Services, and 25 percent received aid from both the ALA and VR. By far, the most frequently used auxiliary learning aid was tutors. Sixty-four percent of the respondents reported using a tutor, 40 percent required assistance in taking examinations (i.e. longer test time, readers, adaptive equipment), 30 percent used tape recorders. Other frequently used devices and aids were taped books, interpreters, readers, and notetakers. Fifty-one percent of the respondents received financial aid, but only eight percent were supported by the Florida Student Assistance Grant or the Florida Undergraduate Scholar's Fund. Interestingly, 87 percent of the respondents reported receiving academic advisement from their present institution, while 47 percent received career counseling. This compares to the 1989 general survey which found that 70 percent of all students received academic advisement and 11 percent of all students received career counseling.

When asked if there were physical barriers at their institution that limited their ability to attend classes, 83 percent of the respondents said no. Ninety-four percent answered that there were no physical barriers that prohibited their living in the dormitory or attending campus cultural events. According to the results of the survey, 89 percent of the respondents felt that they were provided equal access to all of the academic, career, or occupational programs offered by their institution. Students were asked to list the most formidable obstacles facing a disabled student at postsecondary institutions in Florida. The largest number of students who answered the question reported that the attitudes of teachers toward disabled students was the most formidable obstacle they faced. Those students noted that a lack of information was often the reason that teachers were unreceptive to the needs, of or the potential of, disabled students.

Other obstacles mentioned were physical barriers and lack of transportation to and from, as well as around campus. When asked what changes need to be made to improve postsecondary access for disabled students, 12 percent of the respondents answered that physical barriers should be removed; 10 percent said more tutors should be provided; eight percent said improved transportation was needed; and eight percent said more teacher awareness of disabled issues was needed to improve postsecondary education for disabled students.

III. ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Statewide Coordination of Disabled Student Services

The last ten years in Florida have witnessed not only a growth in the number of disabled students attending postsecondary institutions, but an increase in the number of laws, agencies, services, and programs designed to enhance disabled educational access. Disabled student access has been referred to by advocates as the "minority issue of the 1990s."

In efforts to ensure equality of access and opportunity, the Equal Educational Opportunity Program Offices in the Department of Education, the State Board of Community Colleges, and the Board of Regents are responsible for ensuring civil rights compliance for all protected classes. However, the resources of these offices are frequently focused on ensuring minority access and retention. No statewide office or position exists that is charged solely with providing technical assistance and information to postsecondary institutions on issues, policies, and laws related to disabled student access. No statewide office or position serves as a focal point for advocacy of disabled student access and retention.

Although serving the same constituency, disabled student coordinators at public community colleges and universities have little or no contact with one another or with their respective boards. Consequently, there is little consistency among institutions when providing academic and support services for disabled students. At the same time, institutions vary in their interpretation of laws and policies affecting disabled students. Some campuses provide minimal support services for disabled students and do little to encourage sensitivity and awareness for disabled issues among faculty and non-disabled students. Other colleges and universities provide an exemplary atmosphere of disabled student access and opportunity.

A growing number of institutional personnel have expressed concern over a lack of state guidance, coordination, and advocacy for disabled students. Questions of policy interpretation, requests for information on existing resources and programs, transportation, diagnostic services, private and public rehabilitative agencies, job placement, federal grants, and financial aid have led to increased calls for a state level position to provide technical and legal assistance to institutions and to serve as a focal point for promoting disabled student access.

Recommendation:

1. **A position with responsibility for Postsecondary Disabled Student Access and Programming should be designated or created in the Department of Education.** Location of the position should be at a level that would permit interaction with representatives of each of the divisions and educational delivery systems. This position should be filled by a person with academic preparation and experience in the policy issues, legal requirements, and learning needs of postsecondary disabled students. Responsibilities of this position would include determining the affect on disabled students of proposed state policies, providing technical assistance to institutions in the training of staff and delivery of disabled

student services and programs, and serving as the statewide focal point and advocate for disabled postsecondary students.

Statewide Data Collection

Despite increased knowledge of and about postsecondary disabled students, there remains a serious gap in Florida's collection of data on the numbers and categories of disabled postsecondary students. In the **Master Plan supplement, Disabled Student Access to Postsecondary Education**, the Commission recommended that the Board of Regents and the State Board of Community Colleges develop common functional definitions for institutional reporting of data on disabled students comparable to those used by the Division of Public Schools. The State Board of Community Colleges has recently updated its student data base to include functional categories of disabled students. While the capability to report data on disabled community college students now exists, some colleges are grouping all of their disabled students into one category, "disabled, but not categorized." This reporting procedure does not accurately reflect the diversity of the disabled student population.

The Board of Regents has not yet updated its student data base; however, each year public universities, by functional category, report the number of disabled students they have served through their disabled student services office to the Board of Regents' Equal Opportunity Program Office. Students enrolled in district postsecondary vocational programs are included in the Division of Vocational, Adult and Community Education's data base.

Collecting accurate data on disabled postsecondary students will always be problematic because institutions are forbidden by federal law (Rehabilitation Act of 1973 Section 504) from making preadmission inquiries as to an applicant's disability. Therefore, institutions must rely on obtaining disabled student data at registration or, orientation, through voluntary self disclosure, or when a student seeks services through the disabled student services office. By using a combination of these methods, institutions and state policy makers would have a more reliable method of obtaining accurate data on disabled postsecondary students. To provide equal access and opportunity, it is necessary to have an accurate demographic profile of Florida's disabled postsecondary students. At the same time, institutions must avoid the temptation to "label" students who prefer not to reveal or document their disability.

Recommendations:

2. **To gather and maintain accurate data on disabled postsecondary students, the Florida Board of Regents should update its student data base to coincide with the functional disability categories used by the State Board of Community Colleges.** All public vocational technical centers, community colleges, and universities should annually report the number of self-identified disabled students by category to their respective sector board. Institutions should provide opportunities for students to identify a disability or need for institutional services at various points of contact such as during orientation or registration. Information regarding the availability of academic aids, disabled student services, or special classroom provisions should be included in post-admissions correspondence to students and in course syllabi.

3. **Public postsecondary institutions should report information on disabled students by the correct functional category or code.** Grouping disabled students into the category "disabled, but not categorized" should be avoided whenever possible.

Statewide Linkages for Disabled Students

Over 200,000 disabled students (11.5 percent of the K-12 population) are enrolled in Florida's public schools. Each year thousands of disabled students graduate from Florida high schools. According to the latest statistics available, 1.2 percent of the state's community college students are disabled, and .9 percent of university students are disabled. A larger percentage (5.9 percent) of district postsecondary students are disabled, but that number includes many students who are enrolled in are adult general education programs, which are primarily remedial.

The Department of Education's Bureau of Education for Exceptional Students works closely with each school district's special education programs and administrators. Other state agencies, such as the Division of Vocational, Adult and Community Education, Special Needs Programs for the Handicapped, provide technical assistance to school districts that offer vocational education to disabled K-12 students. While a network of agencies work to coordinate programs and services for K-12 disabled students, there are very few established linkages to encourage or support disabled students to continue their education or training at the postsecondary level. Some universities and community colleges have made independent efforts to contact high school counselors in their area to encourage disabled students to attend their institutions, but most transition programs have concentrated on bridging the gap between school programs and employment or services for the severely disabled student. Many disabled high school students are not aware that community colleges and universities provide support services for disabled students or allow for course substitutions and alternate admission status to qualified disabled students. Some high school guidance counselors are unaware of the special adaptations that are available for disabled students to take standardized achievement examinations.

All K-12 students are identified in the student data base by social security number. While it would be unlawful and an invasion of privacy to identify and contact disabled high school students with information concerning postsecondary opportunities, individual school districts could provide the state and postsecondary institutions with the number of juniors and seniors with disabilities who could be considered potential postsecondary students. This information could be valuable in making articulation projections and plans and for evaluating the state's ongoing attempts to provide educational access and opportunity.

Recommendations:

4. **The Statewide Coordinator for Disabled Student Access, and the Equal Educational Opportunity Program Coordinators for the Board of Regents, State Board of Community Colleges, and Department of Education should initiate articulation efforts with high school guidance counselors throughout the State to encourage disabled students to attend postsecondary institutions.** Information on services and programs for postsecondary disabled students should be provided by these

offices to principals, counselors, participants in the teachers-as-advisors program, and other faculty.

5. **The Bureau of Career Development should expand its computerized counseling component, MICROCHOICES, to identify by postsecondary institution the following information: the phone number of the disabled student services coordinator, confirmation of academic adaptive devices available to disabled students, confirmation of the existence of a multi-disciplinary center for learning disabled students and the phone number, and confirmation of the availability of disabled student housing and parking.** The Bureau should determine the most effective means of making MICROCHOICES available to sight impaired high school and community college students.

Institutional Resources and Services for Disabled Students

Each public postsecondary institution in Florida has designated a coordinator for disabled student services. At some institutions this person serves in other capacities as well. For instance, at some community colleges disabled student coordinators are also counselors with training in a particular disability or psychological field. At some universities, disabled coordinators are also the institutional equity officer in charge of coordinating services and compliance for all protected classes. Some disabled coordinators work only with student disability issues, while others enforce provisions of the Rehabilitation Act dealing with campus employment of the disabled (504 coordinators). When responsibilities for ensuring institutional compliance with civil rights legislation and policies are diffused, it is imperative that clear and open communication exists between offices and personnel.

Institutions that have on-going committees or task forces that meet on a regular basis to discuss equity issues and concerns appear to have a stronger sense of awareness of disabled issues among all components of the campus. This is particularly true of those institutions that have a separate office for disabled student services filled by an individual with the appropriate background and training to successfully manage issues and programs in a complex and diverse field. No disabled student services coordinator, however, can be effective unless he or she is part of institutional planning and policy making.

Recommendation:

6. **All public postsecondary institutions should hire disabled student coordinators who are trained and experienced in providing disabled student services and interpreting laws and policies that affect disabled students and employees.** Institutions should include these coordinators in all planning and policy making activities that affect disabled students and employees. Committees designed to improve disabled student access, retention, and employment should meet on a regular basis and include various components of the institutional community.

Accommodations, services, and programs for disabled students vary widely at public postsecondary institutions, yet surveyed disabled students report that the

"attitude of teachers" is the most formidable educational obstacle they face. Providing an accessible learning environment is the fundamental objective of disabled student access, yet only seven community colleges and four universities provide either ongoing opportunities to increase faculty awareness and understanding of disability issues or provide current information on laws, policies, and resources related to disabled student access. (Senate Committee on Higher Education, 1990). Florida International University has published a booklet entitled **Faculty Handbook on Accommodation of Disabled Students**, which provides valuable legal, medical, and technical information to faculty and personnel. The University of Florida Office of Student Services conducts workshops each semester for new faculty and teaching assistants detailing pertinent information on classroom accommodations and support services for disabled students. In addition, the University of Florida publishes a Disabled Student Handbook, available to all disabled students and distributed at preview, orientation, registration, and upon request. Valencia Community College appears to have one of the most accessible campuses for disabled students in Florida. The college provides a variety of academic support services, technical assistance, and specific employment and training programs to its disabled population. In addition, Valencia provides ongoing training seminars for faculty and staff on disabled awareness and legal issues, tutoring skills, and instructional and accommodation procedures. Florida Community College at Jacksonville, also a state leader in disabled student access, provides a variety of informational booklets, seminars, and workshops on disabled student issues to all faculty and personnel. At Florida State University (FSU), a disabled student advocate serves as an advisor to the student body president and as a liaison between student government and FSU's disabled student services. At Lake-Sumter Community College, a student support group--Accepting Challenges Together (ACT)--helps provide an atmosphere of encouragement and acceptance for the college's disabled student population. Plans to establish ACT chapters at all postsecondary institutions are currently being planned by supporters of this group.

Recommendation:

7. **All public community colleges, universities and vocational-technical centers should provide ongoing opportunities to increase institutional awareness of disabilities and knowledge of disabled student issues, including instructional and classroom accommodation procedures, legal access requirements, and local, state, and institutional resources and services.**

Barriers to Disabled Student Access

Disabled students are confronted by numerous barriers that can circumvent their postsecondary education goals. To learning disabled (LD) students, their "unseen disability" creates special problems that few institutions are prepared to meet. Unlike other better known disabilities, there is no single definition of a learning disabled person. Each learning disabled individual is different. A learning disability is a permanent disorder that affects the manner in which individuals retain, process, and express information, not a form of mental retardation or emotional disorder. Not all students who have problems mastering certain basic skills or succeeding in academic or vocational programs are learning disabled. In simplest terms, a learning disability is the discrepancy between learning potential and academic performance. While most college LD students possess intellectual ability sufficient to comprehend college-level

academic subject matter, they may lack the strategies and skills needed to benefit fully from higher education. Specifically, they are often deficient in the skills necessary to acquire and retain information from lectures and other classroom activities. As was mentioned earlier, LD students are eligible for course substitutions, a waiver from one or more sections of CLAST, and admission by exception into a limited access program. LD students who do not meet entrance criteria to a state university may be accepted under the exception rule (SBE Rule 6C-6.002).

Until recently, most programs for LD students were concentrated in secondary schools and few learning disabled students attempted to progress to postsecondary institutions. Today, as over 160,000 LD students participate in higher education, more and more postsecondary institutions are adapting to the needs of these students by providing support services, including tutors, notetakers, technological learning aids, and courses in study skills and organizational techniques. Just as important, however, are the adjustments faculty can make in teaching style and course requirements to compensate for a student's learning problems.

Based on the Commission's survey, 29 percent of the disabled students in Florida's public postsecondary institutions are learning disabled. According to the disabled student coordinators at the public postsecondary institutions, the growing number of learning disabled students on their campuses is one of their most pressing concerns. The coordinators also noted a lack of learning disabled specialists and other trained personnel on their campuses.

Added to the concerns of providing access for learning disabled students are the increasing numbers of LD students who were not diagnosed as children and who enter postsecondary education unaware of their specific learning disability. Lacking certain empirical or cognitive skills, these students are unable to master certain subjects or pass standardized tests required by higher education institutions. Often these undiagnosed LD students drop out of college before they can be adequately diagnosed or provided with academic aids and course substitutions that would enable them to succeed. In Florida, there are no standard procedures for diagnosing postsecondary students for learning disabilities, and there is only one higher education institution, Florida A & M University, that has a learning and development center for LD students. This center is funded annually by the Legislature. All other institutions have varying procedures for helping LD students, and only a handful have learning disabled specialists on their staff or in a counseling center.

Recommendation:

8. **The Statewide Coordinator for Postsecondary Disabled Student Access should host a joint meeting of disabled student coordinators from all public and private postsecondary institutions in Florida to develop systemwide intervention strategies, services, and programs that should be provided for disabled students.** Information gathered from other states and from the Florida A & M Learning Development and Evaluation Center should be considered when adapting systemwide policies and procedures for learning disabled students. As a minimum, each institution should provide ongoing information sessions

or seminars on learning disabled postsecondary students to incoming faculty, teaching assistant, administrators, and counselors.

Currently five universities in Florida--The University of Florida, Florida State University, The University of Miami, Jacksonville University, and the University of South Florida--have multi-disciplinary centers that provide a variety of diagnostic services, resources, and programs for school age children with a variety of learning and developmental disabilities. These centers were created and funded to meet the needs of K-12 children, but all have, on occasion, provided diagnostic services to postsecondary students. Staff directors of these centers, as well as the staff director at the Florida A&M Learning and Development Center, report that their programs could be expanded to include diagnostic and program services to LD postsecondary students on their campuses and from surrounding areas.

The expanding numbers of LD students in higher education have led some states to adopt procedures, laws, and guidelines for ensuring legally required equal access for disabled students. California, Wisconsin, Illinois, and Ohio are a few states that have developed model learning disabled programs and diagnostic testing procedures. Other states are experimenting with various intervention strategies for enhancing the ability of LD students to succeed at the postsecondary level. Very few methods have been empirically validated and the debate over how best to diagnose and assist learning disabled postsecondary students continues.

Recommendation:

9. **The five existing university multi-disciplinary centers currently established and funded to serve school age disabled children should be eligible for support to include services for postsecondary adults in need of testing for learning disabilities.** The Learning Development and Evaluation Center at Florida A&M University should also be eligible for such support. One or more of the centers should provide in-service training for postsecondary personnel such as disabled student coordinators and counselors who provide direct services for disabled postsecondary students. The need for additional funding to provide such services should be based on a cost analysis provided by a committee composed of the center directors and the Statewide Coordinator for Postsecondary Disabled Student Access.

The removal of physical or architectural barriers on postsecondary campuses has improved accessibility for many physically and sight impaired students. As in all 50 states, Florida postsecondary institutions are subject to federal guidelines that delineate accessibility requirements in new construction and remodeling of existing structures. In addition, new construction and major remodeling programs at community colleges and universities are subject to the guidelines and standards established in Chapter 553, Part V, Florida Statutes and the Accessibility Requirements Manual compiled by the Florida Board of Building Codes and Standards.

Although it would appear that physical barriers to access would be a matter of the past, disabled student coordinators note that there are still problems with

campus accessibility (Senate Survey, 1990). When asked if there were physical barriers at their institutions that limited their ability to attend classes, 83 percent of disabled students said no.

While both the Board of Regents and the Department of Education inspect all new construction and "substantial" remodeling during and after completion of each project, it appears that certain lapses in the accessibility codes may be occurring on public postsecondary campuses. At the same time, renovation projects that do not fall under the category of "substantial improvement" may need to be monitored more closely at the institutional level. Often these minor renovations or improvements can be made at minimal cost and can substantially improve access for disabled students.

Recommendation:

10. **Facilities and planning personnel at each public postsecondary institution should provide the disabled student coordinator or other designated individual with all plans for new construction or renovation projects to be reviewed for compliance with federal and state building codes and accessibility laws.** The Statewide Coordinator for Disabled Student Access should serve as a link between public postsecondary institutions and the Board of Regents and the Department of Education's Office of Educational Facilities during all phases of construction and major remodeling.

The limited availability of transportation services was identified as one of the major barriers to disabled postsecondary access in the Commission's 1986 **Master Plan Supplement.** Historically, several transportation services were available to the disabled and other transportation disadvantaged persons, but it was not until 1979 that the Legislature mandated the coordination of all transportation disadvantaged services by the Transportation Disadvantaged Commission. The Commission is charged with developing policies and procedures for the coordination of local, federal, and state funding sources for the transportation disadvantaged. The Commission establishes statewide objectives for providing transportation services for the transportation disadvantaged in a statewide five year plan. At the local level, coordinating boards, comprised of members who represent their disadvantaged constituencies, were authorized by the 1989 Legislature to develop local service agreements for the transportation disadvantaged. Each Board is staffed by a transportation coordinator who is responsible for the overall planning, administration, and delivery of transportation services, including approving and coordinating the use of school buses and other public transit services to transport the disadvantaged. Any agency purchasing or providing transportation services to the disadvantaged must contract with the community transportation coordinator.

Some public postsecondary institutions operate buses and vans that are not accessible to all disabled students. As a result of the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), all new transportation vehicles purchased by public entities that operate a transportation system must now be "readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities, including individuals who use wheelchairs." All existing vehicles that are not accessible must be replaced within five years.

Recommendation:

11. **To provide input on the transportation needs of disabled postsecondary students, disabled student coordinators at each public postsecondary institution should work closely with, or serve on, the local transportation coordinating board established pursuant to Section 427.0157, Florida Statutes.** Disabled student coordinators should monitor the purchase of transportation vehicles by their institutions to ensure compliance with provisions in the Americans With Disabilities Act and to provide input on the transportation needs of disabled postsecondary students.

Employment Opportunities

Unemployment and underemployment among disabled Floridians is a serious problem. Despite efforts by vocational schools, community colleges, universities, and public and private agencies, 55 percent of disabled Floridians are unemployed because of their disability. Unemployment is highest among disabled women of all races. While training and education can help improve a disabled person's chance of securing employment, barriers such as employer prejudice, inaccessible work environments, and lack of transportation continue to keep disabled people out of the work environment. The Florida Educational Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP) found that only eight percent of persons who had left or completed a vocational education for the handicapped program during 1988-89 were employed for the entire third quarter of the year. The Department of Vocational, Adult and Community Education reported that out of 12,119 students who completed any type of district postsecondary vocational programs, 133 were disabled. Of that number, 72 found jobs related to their training. At Florida's public community colleges, 104 disabled students completed postsecondary adult vocational programs (non-credit) during 1987-88. Of that number, 54 found employment related to their training.

Florida law requires that school districts and community colleges that offer job-preparatory vocational education programs must report the number of program completers who are placed. A student is considered a "placement" if he or she becomes employed in an occupation requiring the use of the competencies acquired in the vocational program, has entered full-time military services, or has continued on to postsecondary education. Any job-preparatory vocational program for which the placement rate is less than 70 percent for three consecutive years is ineligible for future state funding. It is important to note that, according to Section 229.551(3)(a) F.S., disabled students may be included in the computation of job preparatory placement rates only when they are considered placements. Some districts and community colleges report data on disabled students to their sector boards and some do not. The reason for eliminating disabled students from the state mandated placement rates was to remove any disincentive for enrolling disabled students in job preparatory programs. While that logic might have led to increased recruitment of disabled students in job preparatory programs, it has certainly not provided any incentive for placing disabled students in jobs. Due to the high incidence of unemployment among all segments of the disabled community, it would appear counterproductive at this time to tie funding for vocational education programs to job placement of disabled students. Just as school districts and community colleges receive additional funding for advanced placement and dually enrolled students, colleges

or districts that place disabled job preparatory completers could be compensated at an additional funding level. Regardless of the funding mechanism, it is imperative that districts and community colleges report accurate placement data on disabled students and encourage every institution to increase efforts to recruit, train, and place disabled students.

Recommendations:

12. **All school districts and community colleges offering vocational job preparatory programs should report placement data on disabled completers to their respective sector boards.** Data on disabled placements should be reported in a separate category but included in the same report with other program information.

13. **The Florida Legislature should authorize an outcome incentive program to provide funds to school districts and community colleges that document increases in the placement of disabled job preparatory completers in job related occupations.** Funds should be used to buy adaptive equipment, materials, and aids for job preparatory programs and for outreach and recruitment efforts among disabled students.

Some school districts offer courses specifically designed for disabled students. Not all districts report student data by exceptionality code or category. Without specific disability information, it is unclear why some disabled students are enrolled in segregated programs instead of regular vocational programs. At the same time, the number of disabled students reported as leavers or completers in district postsecondary job preparatory programs are extremely low (87 for 1988-89). It is not clear if these figures reflect poor reporting procedures or poor recruitment and retention efforts.

Recommendations:

14. **School districts should report data on disabled students enrolled in all postsecondary vocational programs by specific exceptionality code or category.** Data bases used by the Division of Public Schools and the Division of Vocational, Adult and Community Education should contain the same or comparable exceptionality codes.

15. **School districts and community colleges should make every effort to mainstream disabled students into regular vocational and academic programs.** This does not include programs for the severely emotionally or mentally disabled who might be shown to benefit from separate education and training, nor does it include specific job training programs that have been successful in placing disabled students in related meaningful employment.

Career Advisement at Community Colleges and Universities

All students, including those with disabilities, need advice about career choices that is based on the student's interests, abilities, skills, and a realistic analysis of the job market. Most community colleges and universities offer

career advisement to disabled students as part of their regular advisement services, which may include information on job opportunities and career options, job search strategies, interviewing, and resume writing. While it is important not to offer advisement to disabled students in a separate duplicative service, the physical environment of the career center should be accessible to all students, and career counselors and advisors should be trained to understand the special needs of disabled students. For instance, students with disabilities may have limited career expectations since they are not often exposed to role models of successfully employed disabled individuals. Many have not had the experience of part-time and summer jobs, which can assist students to assess their competence and career satisfaction. Importantly, many disabled postsecondary students are not aware of the companies, businesses, and industries that regularly hire disabled workers. At the same time, businesses and industries are often unaware of the valuable capabilities and skills of prospective disabled employees.

Many public postsecondary institutions in Florida offer a variety of career services to disabled students. The Commission's disabled student survey revealed that 47 percent of the respondents had received career counseling. When asked how career counseling could be improved, students most often answered that counselors should have more knowledge of job opportunities for the disabled. Experienced career counselors note that it is imperative to work closely with prospective employers to provide assistance with the recruitment and placement of disabled students. Recently, Valencia Community College received a federal grant that enabled disabled student staff to survey public and private business and industry in Orange County to ascertain the best job opportunities and careers for persons with a wide range of disabilities. Some disabled students are unaware that certain careers can be inaccessible to persons with specific disabilities.

An analysis of some of the most successful career placement centers in other states revealed that it is important to intervene early in a disabled student's educational plans to encourage exploration of career alternatives. Other successful centers work closely with public and private sector employers to provide disabled students with opportunities for internships, summer jobs, and cooperative education. As with all students, careful planning and preparation are crucial ingredients of successful career preparation.

Recommendation:

16. **All public postsecondary institutions in Florida should provide the necessary training for career advisement personnel to allow them to provide effective advisement to disabled students, including evaluation of the students' abilities, interests, and aptitudes; realistic information about employment trends and opportunities in the current job market; and examples of coping strategies and adaptations used by successful disabled people working in various careers.** Career counselors should make every effort to establish linkages with local, state, and nationwide businesses and industries that provide employment opportunities for disabled workers and encourage such policies among those that do not. Career counselors at postsecondary institutions should work closely with public and private agencies that provide career counseling and services to disabled citizens.

Resources for Disabled Students

As was mentioned early, there are a variety of federal and state programs that provide assistance for postsecondary disabled students. Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) is the nationwide federal-state program for assisting eligible disabled persons to become employed. Vocational Rehabilitation provides educational assistance for disabled students, as does the federal-state supported Division of Blind Services (DBS). The Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act Amendments of 1990 authorizes school districts and community colleges to use federal funds to support vocational programs and services for disabled students. In addition, the Florida Legislature has created two unique funding programs to help disabled students--the Auxiliary Learning Aids program and the Zollie M. Maynard Education for Handicapped Adults Act.

The Auxiliary Learning Aids Program (ALA) was established to assist public universities and community colleges in providing auxiliary learning aids to disabled postsecondary students and is administered by the Department of Education's (DOE) Postsecondary Education Policy Analysis and Development Unit. Auxiliary learning aid funds are awarded to institutions as reimbursement for eligible expenditures made for disabled students. Before each quarter, institutions are required to submit an estimate of the funds that they will need to serve disabled students. Each institution must document that funds are spent only on students who have a disability, which has been documented by a physician or an agency such as the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation or the Division of Blind Services. At the end of each quarter, institutions submit a report of expenditures that indicates how much money has been spent on each student and what services were provided. Equipment purchases must also be reported. Since 1985, institutions have been required to provide matching funds of at least 20 percent to receive ALA funds. To receive services provided by the ALA, students must first exhaust their eligibility, for or be found ineligible for, other federal or state sources of assistance. It is important to note that ALA support is available to postsecondary disabled students regardless of their academic major or potential career choice. Recipients of VR or DBS funds must have an approved career plan before they are eligible for support from those agencies. Students who do not have an approved education plan could be denied services by either agency.

When the Auxiliary Learning Aids program was created, it was not clear how many institutions would request funds from the program or how many disabled students were actually enrolled in postsecondary institutions. Some institutions requested large amounts of money from the program and others minimal amounts. A few institutions did not request any money. More than ten years after the program was started, ALA monies allocated to institutions are still tied in part to the original funding levels. In other words, each year institutions are basically awarded the amount of money they have previously received with some increases when available. This is in large part due to the fact that money allocated by the legislature to support the Auxiliary Learning Aids program has not kept pace with the growing number of disabled students enrolled in higher education.

Although the Department of Education does not keep an annual compilation indicating exactly how many disabled students have received support from the ALA program, the Director of the Postsecondary Education Policy Unit estimates that approximately 4,000 disabled students received support from the program during the 1989-90 academic year.

In 1979, approximately three quarters of a million dollars was allocated to the Auxiliary Learning Aids program. By 1988, the allocation had increased to 1.3 million dollars. Despite requests by the Commissioner of Education for an increased appropriation, funding for the program remains at 1.3 million. During the 1989-90 academic year, seven universities and 20 community colleges expended their full allocations from the program, and provided more than 20 percent as a match and, in addition, justified needs for increased funding ranging from $1,100 to $200,000 for 1990-91 in excess of their 1989-90 allocation from the State. In all, $2.6 million was requested by the nine universities and 28 community colleges.

While the limited availability of ALA funds does not in any way negate an institution's legal responsibility (Section 504, Rehabilitation Act) for providing auxiliary learning aids to disabled students, it is clear that the large increase in disabled postsecondary students, particularly learning disabled and deaf students who require expensive auxiliary mechanical and human aids, has necessitated an increase in ALA funding.

Recommendation:

17. **The Legislature should increase the 1991-92 appropriation for the Auxiliary Learning Aids program to reflect the increased number of postsecondary disabled students enrolled in public institutions and in need of auxiliary learning aid assistance.** The appropriation should reflect the increase in the number of students served by the program since its inception and the corresponding increase in the price of mechanical and human adaptive aids.

Institutions are legally responsible for providing disabled students with whatever auxiliary learning aids are necessary to ensure equal access and opportunity. While many postsecondary institutions have already purchased various mechanical academic aids for disabled students, human auxiliary learning aids, such as tutors, notetakers, and interpreters, are reoccurring expenses. The cost of providing these resources has soared over the last decade; therefore, institutions must maximize their resources and develop alternative methods of providing individual human services to every disabled student. For example, instead of using separate notetakers, tutors, and interpreters for individual students, institutions could tape or transcribe classroom lectures or class notes and make them available at any time. Tutors could work in a group setting particularly with students who are taking required undergraduate courses. Interpreters could be part of a permanent disabled student services staff and their services shared, whenever possible, among hearing impaired and deaf students.

Recommendation:

18. **To maximize limited resources and provide academic learning aids in as equitable a manner as possible, public postsecondary institutions must develop alternative methods of providing individual human services to every disabled student.** For example, students needing interpreters could be assigned to the same section, particularly for core courses.

As was previously noted, many institutions provide far in excess of the 20 percent in matching funds that is currently required for participation in the ALA program. For example, during 1989-90 St. Petersburg Community College provided 400 percent in matching funds; Manatee Community college provided 631 percent in matching funds; and the University of Central Florida provided 125 percent in matching funds. While Miami-Dade Community College has one of the largest populations of disabled students in the state and spent $384,839 providing auxiliary learning aids for disabled students, the State reimbursed Miami-Dade over 80 percent of that amount ($320,555). The institution provided the remaining funds. Based on an analysis of both the institutional and state contributions to disabled students in 1989-90, it is clear that there is some imbalance in the distribution of auxiliary learning aids funds. This is due in part to the manner in which the funding formula was initially constructed. It should be noted that not all disabled services are paid for with ALA funds. Most institutions pay the salaries of disabled student coordinators out of institutional funds and provide for other services, equipment and programs as well.

Recommendation:

19. **To ensure that institutions commit a reasonable amount of funds to provide disabled student access, and to distribute funds from the Auxiliary Learning Aids program in as equitable a manner as possible, each public postsecondary institution should provide at least 30 percent in matching funds to be eligible for reimbursement from the ALA program.** This match should begin with the 1991-92 academic year and increase to a 40 percent match by the 1996-97 academic year. To help determine the amount of ALA funds each institution receives, the Department of Education should factor in the institution's ALA allocation for the previous year, the institutional contribution, and the total number of disabled students served.

Since the ALA program was created, a substantial amount of equipment and other mechanical aids have been purchased by institutions with those funds. Currently no state inventory of this equipment exists, just as there is no state inventory of the number of students who have been served by funds from the program, although institutions send a quarterly reimbursement form to the Department of Education listing each recipient of aid by name and the type of services or equipment provided to that student.

Recommendation:

20. **The Department of Education's Postsecondary Education Policy Unit should compile a list of the equipment and aids purchased by institutions with auxiliary learning aid funds, institutional funds, and funds provided by other agencies.** The Department should maintain annual data on the unduplicated number of students who receive support from the ALA by institution.

State Board of Education Rule 6A-10.028 provides that community colleges and universities are eligible for reimbursement of funds expended to purchase auxiliary learning aids for eligible disabled students. Neither that rule nor

the General Appropriations Act has specified that students must be enrolled in credit earning courses or academic (non-vocational) courses. Universities and particularly community colleges have expressed confusion over whether students enrolled in non-credit courses or postsecondary vocational courses are eligible for participation in the ALA program. A general perception is that institutions may use auxiliary learning aids money solely on students who are enrolled in degree seeking programs.

Recommendation:

21. **Funds from the Auxiliary Learning Aids program should be available to postsecondary disabled students enrolled in all vocational classes awarding either an Associate of Science Degree or a certificate consisting of college credits.** Disabled students enrolled in non-credit vocational or academic programs are eligible for support from Carl Perkins funds and should not be eligible to participate in the ALA program. The State Board of Education should clarify eligibility criteria in rule.

In 1990, the Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act was restructured to give local education sites (districts or community colleges) more control over how federal vocational dollars are spent. The new law requires that priority for funds be given to sites that have the highest concentration of disadvantaged and disabled populations. Application of the new funding formula for Florida will result in 11 of the 67 school districts receiving 66 percent of the Perkins dollars for secondary vocational programs. Because of their relatively small disabled and disadvantaged populations, five school districts will not receive any Perkins funds unless they form an educational consortium. Sixteen school districts will receive from 13 to 25 percent less than last year's allocation.

In February 1991, the United States Department of Education rejected Florida's formula for allocating Perkins funds to community colleges and area vocational-technical centers for postsecondary vocational programs. The Division of Vocational, Adult and Community Education is currently working to devise a new formula for allocating Perkins funds for postsecondary education programs. The formula will reflect the number of Pell Grant recipients at each educational site, the number of students enrolled in programs serving economically disadvantaged adults, and the number of participants in programs assisted under the Job Training Partnership Act. As mentioned earlier, educational sites will have to submit a plan detailing how they will spend Perkins dollars on programs and services for disadvantaged and disabled students. Once those plans are approved, it will be four years before the State has the authority to review them to determine if federal dollars are actually being spent on programs and services for the disadvantaged and disabled. Currently there are no provisions of the Act that would allow the State to invoke sanctions against educational sites that do not use funds to support or encourage educational and training programs for disabled postsecondary vocational students.

Recommendation:

22. **The Division of Vocational, Adult and Community Education (DVACE) should carefully monitor the compliance plans of districts and community colleges receiving funds from the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act**

Amendments of 1990 to ensure that services and programs for disabled students receive priority attention.

For several years the Legislature examined the provision of increased funding for more than 19,000 adult students who were disabled. In 1989 the Legislature enacted the Zollie M. Maynard, Sr., Education for Handicapped Adults Act, which provided the impetus for such change. The Act was funded by the 1990 Legislature. The Act provides that school districts or community colleges offering adult general educational and vocational preparatory courses are eligible to receive increased weighted funding for disabled students enrolled in those programs. Participating schools or colleges must develop a plan to submit to DOE's Division of Adult and Community Education for approval. Currently, only school districts have submitted the necessary plans, although at least nine community colleges offer adult general education courses.

Proponents of the Zollie Maynard Act contend that the district or community college plans will ensure that the increased funding available for courses for the disabled will be spent on students who are clearly benefiting from the programs and making a recognizable transition into employment or more advanced training or education. Skeptics maintain that the increased weighted funding might be misused by supporting students who are in sheltered workshops or training programs from which they will clearly never leave or advance. At the same time, some educators are concerned that the availability of increased funding for certain programs will have a negative impact on the State's commitment to mainstreaming disabled students.

Recommendation:

23. **The Division of Vocational, Adult and Community Education (DVACE) should carefully monitor district plans for participation in the Zollie M. Maynard, Sr. Education for Handicapped Adults program.** Community colleges should work with DVACE to ensure that eligible students in all parts of the State receive equitable vocational training opportunities.

APPENDIX A
Tables

TABLE 1

AUXILIARY LEARNING AIDS PROGRAM EXPENDITURES 1989-90

INSTITUTION	SPENDING TOTAL	STATE CONTRIBUTION	INSTITUTION CONTRIBUTION	CURRENT PERCENT OF MATCH	PROJECTED 30 PERCENT MINIMUM (INST. CONTRIBUTION)	PROJECTED 40 PERCENT MINIMUM (INST. CONTRIBUTION)
FLORIDA A&M	11,139	8,913	2,226	25%	2,674	3,565
FLORIDA ATLANTIC	24,276	13,958	10,318	74%	10,318 *	10,318 *
FLORIDA INTERNATIONA	42,941	29,791	13,150	44%	13,150 *	13,150 *
FLORIDA STATE	112,349	90,852	21,497	24%	27,256	36,341
U. OF CENTRAL FLORIDA	38,634	17,172	21,462	125%	21,462 *	21,462 *
U. OF FLORIDA	85,408	52,333	33,075	63%	33,075 *	33,075 *
U. OF NORTH FLORIDA	41,645	27,395	14,250	52%	14,250 *	14,250 *
U. OF SOUTH FLORIDA	71,845	53,952	17,893	33%	17,893 *	21,581
U. OF WEST FLORIDA	6,612	4,724	1,888	40%	1,888 *	1,888
UNIV. TOTAL	434,849	299,090	135,759	45%	141,966	155,630
BREVARD	96,409	74,406	22,003	30%	22,003	29,762
BROWARD	47,587	38,725	8,862	23%	11,618	15,490
CENTRAL FLORIDA	36,140	23,977	12,163	51%	12,163 *	12,163 *
CHIPOLA	26,963	18,925	8,038	42%	8,038 *	8,038
DAYTONA BEACH	20,164	11,102	9,062	82%	9,062 *	9,062 *
EDISON	10,960	6,598	4,362	66%	4,362 *	4,362 *
FL. CC AT JAX.	203,347	169,458	33,889	20%	50,837	67,783
FLORIDA KEYS	500	500	0	0%	150	200
GULF COAST	22,153	13,918	8,235	59%	8,235 *	8,235 *
HILLSBOROUGH	26,354	20,098	6,256	31%	6,256 *	8,039
INDIAN RIVER	10,254	8,844	1,410	16%	2,653	3,538
LAKE CITY	7,525	6,023	1,502	25%	1,807	2,409
LAKE-SUMTER	41,945	11,281	30,664	272%	30,664 *	30,664 *
MANATEE	87,340	11,943	75,397	631%	75,397 *	75,397 *
MIAMI-DADE	384,839	320,555	64,284	20%	96,167	128,222
NORTH FLORIDA	165,697	34,236	131,461	384%	131,461 *	131,694 *
OKALOOSA-WALTON	2,888	2,312	576	25%	694	925
PALM BEACH	10,505	7,418	3,087	42%	3,087 *	3,087 *
PASCO-HERNANDO	1,146	900	246	27%	270	360

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TABLE 1--Continued

AUXILIARY LEARNING AIDS PROGRAM EXPENDITURES 1989-90

INSTITUTION	SPENDING TOTAL	STATE CONTRIBUTION	INSTITUTION CONTRIBUTION	PERCENT OF MATCH	30 PERCENT MINIMUM (INST. CONTRIBUTION)	40 PERCENT MINIMUM (INST. CONTRIBUTION)
PENSACOLA	46,257	36,357	9,900	27%	10,907	14,543
POLK	8,739	4,005	4,734	118%	4,734 *	4,734 *
ST. JOHNS RIVER	11,481	10,542	939	9%	3,163	4,217
ST. PETERSBURG	86,136	17,218	68,918	400%	68,918 *	68,918 *
SANTA FE	26,422	22,020	4,402	20%	6,606	8,808
SEMINOLE	35,597	14,373	21,224	148%	21,224 *	21,224 *
SOUTH FLORIDA	5,771	5,589	182	3%	1,677	2,236
TALLAHASSEE	42,106	23,225	18,881	81%	18,881 *	18,881 *
VALENCIA	156,923	115,301	41,622	36%	41,662 *	46,120
COM. COLL. TOTAL	1,622,148	1,029,849	592,299	58%	652,695	729,111
UNIVERSITIES TOTAL	434,849	299,090	135,759	45%	141,966	155,630
GRAND TOTAL	2,056,997	1,328,939	728,058	55%	794,660	884,741

* Institutions with matching amounts above the specified level.

Source: Department of Education

TABLE 2

ENROLLMENT IN U. S. POSTSECONDARY SCHOOLS BY YOUTHS
WITH DISABILITIES 1 TO 2 YEARS AFTER LEAVING HIGH SCHOOL

*Percent Taking Courses From:

DISABILITY CATEGORY	ANY POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION	VOCATIONAL/ TRADE SCHOOL	2-YEAR COLLEGE	4-YEAR COLLEGE	NUMERICAL SAMPLE SIZE
All conditions	14.6	8.1	5.9	2.1	1,265
Learning disabled	16.7	9.6	6.9	1.8	245
Emotionally disturbed	11.7	8.8	4.1	1.3	131
Mentally retarded	5.8	4.3	1.2	.6	164
Speech impaired	29.3	7.0	19.3	8.3	83
Visually impaired	42.1	2.9	15.2	27.5	110
Deaf	38.5	7.0	19.0	15.2	154
Hard of hearing	30.1	11.6	12.7	7.0	101
Orthopedically impaired	28.0	9.0	10.4	9.5	108
Health impaired	30.7	13.2	12.1	7.6	65
Multiply handicapped	3.8	.9	4.0	.2	77
Deaf/blind	8.3	8.8	0.0	0.0	27

SOURCE: SRI International: Data collected from parent interviews, a survey of school staff, and school records.

* Data have been weighted to represent the national secondary school-age special education population.

TABLE 3

STUDENTS ENROLLED IN U. S. POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS
BY TYPE OF DISABILITY: FALL 1986

TYPE OF DISABILITY	NUMBER OF POSTSECONDARY STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE OF ALL STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE OF DISABLED STUDENTS*
Total, any disability	1,319,229	10.5	100.0
Specific learning disability	160,878	1.3	12.2
Visual handicap	514,681	4.1	39.0
Hard of hearing	265,484	2.1	20.1
Deafness	80,910	0.6	6.1
Speech disability	62,525	0.5	4.7
Orthopedic handicap	231,491	1.8	17.6
Health impairment	320,272	2.6	24.3

* Comprise students who reported that they had one or more of the following conditions: a specific learning disability, a visual handicap, hard of hearing, deafness, a speech disability, an orthopedic handicap, or a health impairment.

NOTE: Details do not add to total, since some students reported two or more disabilities.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1987 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study.

TABLE 4

STUDENTS ENROLLED IN U. S. POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS BY DISABILITY STATUS AND SELECTED STUDENT CHARACTERISTIC: FALL 1986

Selected student characteristic	Disabled students*	Nondisabled students
Total postsecondary students	1,319,229	11,260,514
	(Percent)	
Total	100.0	100.0
Sex		
Male	50.8	44.7
Female	49.2	55.3
Race/ethnicity		
American Indian	1.9	0.8
Asian American	4.1	5.5
Black, non-Hispanic	8.0	9.0
Hispanic	7.5	6.5
White, non-Hispanic	78.5	78.2
Age		
15 to 23	49.8	55.8
24 to 29	17.5	19.8
30 or older	32.7	24.4
Marital status		
Single, never married	62.0	66.2
Married	27.2	26.5
Separated	2.1	1.4
Divorced	7.4	5.4
Widowed	1.3	0.5
Attendance status		
Full-time	62.8	61.0
Part-time	37.2	39.0
Dependency status		
Dependent	55.9	59.5
Independent	44.1	40.5
Citizenship		
U.S. citizen	96.2	94.1
Not U.S. citizen	3.8	5.9
Housing status		
School-owned	19.1	18.9
Off-campus, not with parents	55.2	53.5
With parents	25.7	27.6
Level of study		
Undergraduate	91.6	88.8
Graduate	6.8	8.7
First-professional	1.6	2.5
Veteran status		
Veteran	11.4	6.0
Not veteran	88.6	94.0
High school education		
Diploma	86.7	91.7
GED or equivalency test	7.6	3.9
Certificate of completion	2.2	2.1
Did not complete high school	3.6	2.2

* Comprises students who reported that they had one or more of the following conditions: a specific learning disability, a visual handicap, hard of hearing, deafness, a speech disability, an orthopedic handicap, or a health impairment.

NOTE: Details may not add to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1987 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study.

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TABLE 5

STUDENTS ENROLLED IN U. S. POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS, BY DISABILITY STATUS AND CONTROL AND LEVEL OF INSTITUTION: FALL 1986

CONTROL AND LEVEL OF INSTITUTION	DISABLED STUDENTS*	NON-DISABLED STUDENTS
Total postsecondary students	1,319,229	11,260,514
	(Percent)	
All institutions	100.0	100.0
Public	75.0	74.2
4-year doctoral	22.1	25.5
Other 4-year	14.3	14.9
2-year	37.2	32.8
Less-than-2-year	1.4	1.0
Private, not-for-profit	19.1	21.2
4-year doctoral	8.3	10.2
Other 4-year	9.4	9.8
2-year	1.3	1.1
Less-than-2-year	0.1	0.1
Private, for-profit	5.9	4.7
2-year and above	2.0	1.8
Less-than-2-year	3.9	2.9

* Comprises students who reported that they had one or more of the following conditions: a specific learning disability, a visual handicap, hard of hearing, deafness, a speech disability, an orthopedic handicap, or a health impairment.

NOTE: Details may not add to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center of Education Statistics, 1987 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study.

TABLE 6

STUDENTS ENROLLED IN U. S. POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS WHO REPORTED AT LEAST ONE DISABILITY,* BY CONTROL AND LEVEL OF INSTITUTION: FALL 1986

CONTROL AND LEVEL OF INSTITUTION	PERCENTAGE OF ALL STUDENTS
All institutions	10.5
Public	10.6
4-year doctoral	9.2
Other 4-year	10.1
2-year	11.8
Less-than-2-year	14.3
Private, not-for-profit	9.6
4-year doctoral	8.6
Other 4-year	10.1
2-year	12.8
Less-than-2-year	11.6
Private, for-profit	12.9
2-year and above	11.8
Less-than-2-year	13.6

* Comprises students who reported that they had one or more of the following conditions: a specific learning disability, a visual handicap, hard of hearing, deafness, a speech disability, an orthopedic handicap, or a health impairment.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1987 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study.

TABLE 7

POSTSECONDARY DISABLED STUDENTS ENROLLED IN FLORIDA PUBLIC POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS*
1989-90 BY SELECT DISABILITIES**

DISABILITIES	VOCATIONAL CENTERS & NON-CENTERS	COMMUNITY COLLEGES	UNIVERSITIES	TOTALS
Visual Impairment	10	510	156	676
Hearing Impairment	21	555	115	691
Physical Impairment	157	806	397	1,360
Speech Impairment	27	52	26	105
Specific Learning Disability	55	679	484	1,218
Other Health Impairment	No Category	1,497	244	1,741
Disabled, Not Categorized	No Category	2,102	No Category	2,102
*** TOTAL	270	6,201	1,422	7,893

SOURCES: Florida Department of Education, State Board of Community Colleges and Board of Regents.

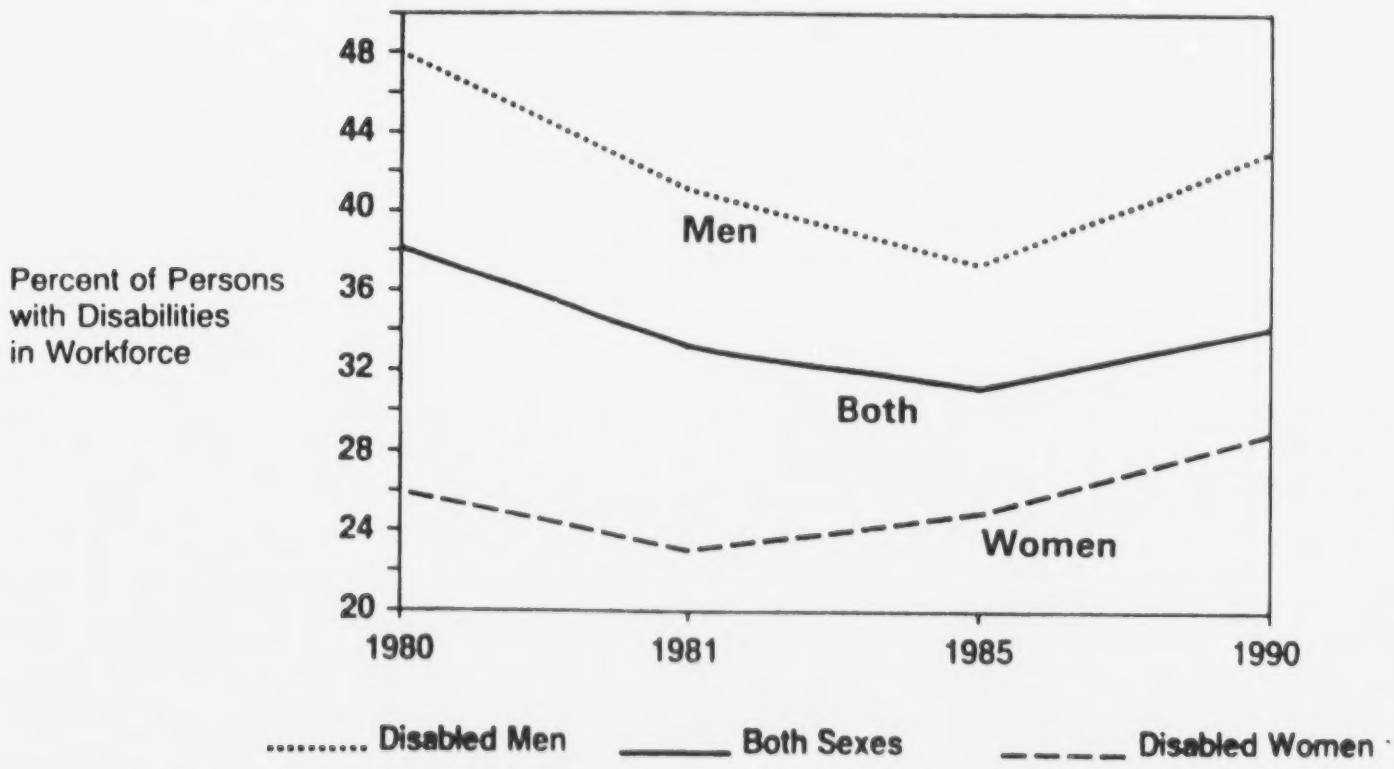
* Includes: Vocational Technical Centers and non-centers, community colleges and universities. Does not include students enrolled in adult general education courses.

** Does not include students enrolled in vocational technical centers and non-centers who are emotionally or mentally impaired or multi-handicapped.

*** Some students reported more than one disability, therefore the total is a duplicated headcount.

TABLE 8

EMPLOYMENT RATES OF DISABLED AMERICANS



SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980, 1981, 1985.

APPENDIX B

Disabled Student Questionnaire and Results

Institution_____
Major_____

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION PLANNING COMMISSION
DISABLED STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE
1990-91

Directions: This questionnaire will assist in determining the availability of postsecondary educational programs and services for disabled students. Please read and complete each item carefully. Check [ ] only one response unless otherwise indicated. Thank you for your response to this questionnaire.

1. Gender: [ ] Female [ ] Male

2. Class status: [ ] Freshman [ ] Junior [ ] Graduate level
   [ ] Sophomore [ ] Senior [ ] Other

3. Degree you are currently working toward:

   [ ] AA [ ] Bachelor's [ ] Doctorate [ ] Certificate
   [ ] AS [ ] Master's [ ] Other (Specify)_____

4. Your age: [ ] 17-24 [ ] 25-33 [ ] 34-44 [ ] 45-64
   [ ] Over 64

5. Your current grade point average: [ ] Below 2.00 [ ] 3.00-3.49
   [ ] 2.00-2.49 [ ] 3.50-4.00
   [ ] 2.50-2.99 [ ] Unknown

6. Race: [ ] White Non-Hispanic [ ] Asian American/Pacific Islander
   [ ] Black Non-Hispanic [ ] American Indian/Alaskan Native
   [ ] Hispanic [ ] Other (Specify)_____

7. Are you an in-state or out-of-state resident?

   [ ] In-state [ ] Out-of-state/not U.S. citizen
   [ ] Out-of-state/U.S. citizen

8. How many semester credit hours are you currently taking?

   [ ] 1-6 [ ] 7-11 [ ] 12-15 [ ] Over 15

9. Are you currently employed? [ ] Yes [ ] No

10. (a) Please note the nature of your disability(ies): (Check all that apply)

    [ ] Hearing impairment [ ] Visual impairment

    [ ] Physical impairment [ ] Speech impairment

    [ ] Specific learning disability (If yes, please answer questions 10 (b), (c), and (d)

    [ ] Mental or emotional disability

    [ ] Other health impairment (Please specify)

_____

10. (b) If you have a specific learning disability, were you diagnosed before or after you enrolled at your current institution?

[ ] Before [ ] After

(c) Did you request to be evaluated for a specific learning disability at your current institution?

[ ] Yes [ ] No (If No, please go on to question 11.)

(d) Did your current institution provide for a learning disability diagnostic test?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

11. Do you require institutional assistance for your disability(ies)?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

12. Do you receive aid of any kind from the following programs or agencies? (Please check all that apply)

[ ] Auxiliary Learning Aids (ALA) [ ] Div. of Vocational Rehabilitation

[ ] Division of Blind Services [ ] Other (Please specify)

_____

13. Do you currently use any of the following academic learning aids while attending or preparing for classes? (Please check all that apply)

[ ] Readers for the blind [ ] Tutors

[ ] Interpreters for the deaf [ ] Taped books

[ ] Talking calculators [ ] Phonic ear

[ ] Tape recorders [ ] Assistance in taking required tests

[ ] Wheelchair desks [ ] Other (Please specify)_____

[ ] Do not use adaptive devices

14. Do you receive financial aid from any of the following? (Please check all that apply)

[ ] Federally Guaranteed Student Loan Program (Stafford)

[ ] Pell Grant

[ ] Florida Student Assistance Grant

[ ] Florida Undergraduate Scholars' Fund

[ ] Other (Please specify)_____

15. Have you ever been turned down for financial aid?

[ ] Yes (**If Yes**, please elaborate) [ ] No

_____

16. Have you received academic counseling from your present institution?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

17. Have you received career counseling from your current institution?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

18. If you received counseling, were you discouraged from pursuing a particular field of interest because of your disability?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

19. What suggestions do you have for improvements in either academic or career advising for disabled students at your institution?

_____

_____

_____

20. Are there physical barriers at your institution that limit your ability to:

(a) attend classes? [ ] Yes [ ] No

(b) attend laboratory sessions? [ ] Yes [ ] No

(c) attend lectures and colloquia outside of the classroom?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

21. Are there physical barriers at your institution that prohibit your:

(a) living in the dormitory? [ ] Yes [ ] No

(b) living in off-campus housing? [ ] Yes [ ] No

(c) attending campus athletic events? [ ] Yes [ ] No

(d) attending campus cultural events? [ ] Yes [ ] No

22. The Florida Educational Equity Act prohibits discrimination against a student in the state system of public education on the basis of race,

national origin, sex, handicap or marital status. Do you feel that you are provided equal access to all of the academic, career or occupational programs offered by your institution?

[ ] Yes [ ] No (If no, please elaborate)_____

_____

_____

23. (a) Have you ever asked to be provided with a substitution for any requirement for graduation? [ ] Yes [ ] No

(b) for admission into a program of study? [ ] Yes [ ] No

(c) for entry into an upper division program? [ ] Yes [ ] No (If no, go on to question 25)

24. Was a substitution made available to you by the institution?

[ ] Yes [ ] No (If No, please elaborate)_____

_____

25. In your opinion, what are the most formidable obstacles facing a disabled student at postsecondary institutions in Florida?

_____

_____

_____

26. What changes should be made (if any) to improve postsecondary access for disabled students?

_____

_____

_____

27. How satisfied are you with the atmosphere at your institution for disabled students?

[ ] Very Satisfied [ ] Satisfied

[ ] Neutral

[ ] Dissatisfied [ ] Very Dissatisfied

Please return to the disabled student coordinator at your college or university.

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION PLANNING COMMISSION

RESULTS OF SURVEY OF FLORIDA POSTSECONDARY DISABLED STUDENTS
FALL 1990

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

	NUMBER	PERCENT
Gender		
Male	71	50.8
Female	69	49.2
Institution		
Community College	93	66.4
University	47	33.6
Class Status		
Freshman	43	34.6
Sophomore	32	25.8
Junior	14	11.3
Senior	12	9.7
Graduate	10	8.1
Other	13	10.5
Missing	16	-
Degree Sought		
AA	51	37.7
AS	28	20.7
Bachelor's	34	25.3
Master's	9	6.7
Doctorate	2	1.5
Other	5	3.7
Certificate	6	4.4
Missing	5	-
Age		
17-24	75	54.3
25-33	37	26.8
35-44	11	8.0
45-64	9	6.6
Over 64	6	4.3
Missing	2	-

	NUMBER	PERCENT
GPA		
Below 2.00	9	6.6
2.00-2.49	27	19.8
2.50-2.99	26	19.1
3.00-3.49	30	22.2
3.50-4.00	21	15.4
Unknown	23	16.9
Missing	4	-
Race		
White/Non-Hispanic	91	65.5
Black/Non-Hispanic	15	10.8
Hispanic	26	18.6
Asian-American/Pacific Islander	3	2.2
American Indian/Alaskan Native	1	.7
Other	3	2.2
Missing	1	-
Resident Status		
In-State	133	95.7
Out-of-State, Not U.S. Citizen	2	1.4
Out-of-State, U.S. Citizen	4	2.9
Missing	1	-
Semester Hours		
1-6	19	14.4
7-11	42	31.8
12-15	65	49.2
Over 15	5	3.8
Non-credit	1	.8
Missing	8	-
Employed		
Yes	53	37.9
No	87	62.1

DISABLED STUDENT SURVEY
SELECTED RESULTS

Q-10A. Please note the nature of your disability(ies): (Check all that apply)*

	NUMBER	PERCENT
Hearing Impairment	35	25.0
Physical Impairment	51	36.4
Specific Learning Disability	40	28.6
Mental or Emotional Disability	9	6.4
Other Health Impairment	15	10.7
Visual Impairment	24	17.1
Speech Impairment	14	.1

*Some students reported more than one disability.

Q-10B. If you have a specific learning disability, were you diagnosed before or after you enrolled at your current institution?

	NUMBER	PERCENT
Before	26	65.0
After	14	35.0

Q-11. Do you require institutional assistance for your disability(ies)?

	NUMBER	PERCENT
Yes	104	79.4
No	27	20.6
Missing	9	-

Q-12. Do you receive aid of any kind from the following programs or agencies?*

	NUMBER	PERCENT
Auxiliary Learning Aids (ALA)	62	44.3
Division of Blind Services	22	15.7
Division of Vocational Rehab.	53	37.9
Other	17	12.1

*Some students receive aid from more than one source.

Q-13. Do you currently use any of the following academic learning aids while attending or preparing for classes? (Please check all that apply)

	NUMBER	PERCENT
Readers for the blind	16	11.4
Interpreters for the deaf	22	15.7
Talking calculators	13	9.3
Tape recorders	42	30.0
Wheelchair desks	7	5.0
Tutors	89	63.6
Taped books	22	15.7
Phonic ear	1	.7
Assistance in taking require tests	56	40.0
Other	42	30.0
Do not use adaptive devices	22	15.7

Q-14. Do you receive financial aid from any of the following? (Please check all that apply)

	NUMBER	PERCENT
Federally Guaranteed Student Loan Program	15	21.1
Pell Grant	28	39.4
Florida Student Assistance Grant	6	8.5
Florida Undergraduate Scholars' Fund	6	8.5
Other	16	22.5

Q-15. Have you ever been turned down for financial aid?

	NUMBER	PERCENT
Yes	37	28.2
No	94	71.8
Missing	9	--

Q-16. Have you received academic counseling from your present institution?

	NUMBER	PERCENT
Yes	120	87.6
No	17	12.4
Missing	3	--

Q-17. Have you received career counseling from your current institution?

	NUMBER	PERCENT
Yes	65	46.8
No	74	53.2
Missing	1	--

Q-18. If you received counseling, were you discouraged from pursuing a particular field of interest because of your disability?

	NUMBER	PERCENT
Yes	15	12.6
No	104	87.4
Missing	21	--

Q-20. Are there physical barriers at your institution that limit your ability to:

		NUMBER	PERCENT
(a) attend classes?	Yes	23	17.2
	No	111	82.8
	Missing	6	--
(b) attend laboratory sessions?	Yes	16	12.2
	No	115	87.8
	Missing	9	--
(c) attend lectures and colloquia outside of the classroom?	Yes	15	11.5
	No	115	88.5
	Missing	10	--

Q-21. Are there physical barriers at your institution that prohibit your:

		NUMBER	PERCENT
(a) living in the dormitory?	Yes	7	6.3
	No	104	93.7
	Missing	29	--
(b) living in off-campus housing?	Yes	10	8.3
	No	111	91.7
	Missing	19	--
(c) attending campus athletic events?	Yes	10	8.1
	No	113	91.9
	Missing	17	--
(d) attending campus cultural events?	Yes	8	6.4
	No	117	93.6
	Missing	15	--

Q-22. The Florida Educational Equity Act prohibits discrimination against a student in the state system of public education on the basis of race, national origin, sex, handicap or marital status. Do you feel that you are provided equal access to all of the academic, career or occupational programs offered by your institution?

	NUMBER	PERCENT
Yes	119	89.5
No	14	10.5
Missing	7	--

Q-23. (a) Have you ever asked to be provided with a substitution for any requirement for graduation?

	NUMBER	PERCENT
Yes	22	16.4
No	112	83.6
Missing	6	--

(b) for admission into a program of study?

Yes	9	8.1
No	102	91.9
Missing	29	--

(c) for entry into an upper division program?

Yes	6	5.3
No	107	94.7
Missing	27	--

Q-24. Was a substitution made available to you by the institution?

	NUMBER	PERCENT
Yes	11	39.3
No	17	60.7

Q-27. How satisfied are you with the atmosphere at your institution for disabled students?

	NUMBER	PERCENT
Very Satisfied	34	25.2
Neutral	16	11.8
Dissatisfied	4	3.0
Satisfied	77	57.0
Very Dissatisfied	4	3.0
Missing	5	--

APPENDIX C

Selected Statewide Resources for Disabled Floridians

Selected Statewide Resources for Disabled Floridians

Alcohol, Drug Abuse and Mental
Health Program Office
1317 Winewood Blvd., Bldg. 6 - Room 183
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0700
(904) 488-8304

Advocacy Center for Persons
With Disabilities, Inc.
Webster Building - Suite 100
2671 Executive Circle West
Tallahassee, FL 32301-5024
(904) 488-9071
1-800-346-4127 (TDD)

Association for Retarded Citizens
of Florida
411 E. College Avenue
Tallahassee, FL 32301
(904) 681-1931

Big Bend Deaf Service Center
P.O. Box 37159
Tallahassee, FL 32315
(904) 575-7710

Consumer Coalition for Mental Health
111 North Gadsden Street - Suite A
Tallahassee, FL 32301
(904) 224-6048

Developmental Services
Department of Health and Rehabilitative
Services
1317 Winewood Blvd.
Building 5, Room 215
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0700
(904) 488-4257

Division of Blind Services
2540 Executive Center Circle West
#203
Tallahassee, FL 32301
(904) 488-1330
(904) 488-1330 (TDD)

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
1709-A Mahan Drive
Tallahassee, FL 32308
(904) 488-8380

Easter Seal Rehabilitation Center
910 Myers Park Drive
Tallahassee, FL 32301
(904) 222-4465

Florida Governor's Alliance for Employment
of Disabled Citizens
345 S. Magnolia Drive - Suite A-15
Tallahassee, FL 32301-0692
(904) 487-2222
(904) 487-0925 (TDD)

Florida Association for Children and
Adults with Learning Disabilities, Inc.
331 E. Henry Street
Punta Gorda, FL 33950
(813) 637-8957

Florida Association of the Deaf
455 Domenico Circle, B-12
St. Augustine, FL 32086
(904) 824-6469

Florida Association for Deaf/Blind
P.O. Box 19644
Jacksonville, FL
(904) 727-9632

Florida Association of
Rehabilitation Facilities
1605 East Plaza Drive, Suite 8
Tallahassee, FL 32308-5311
(904) 877-4816

Florida Council of Handicapped
Organizations, Inc.
445 Douglas Ave., Suite 1605
Altamonte Springs, FL 32714
(305) 298-3315

Florida Council for the
Hearing Impaired
Department of Education
622-C Florida Education Center
Tallahassee, FL 32399
(904) 488-1712

Florida Developmental
Disabilities Planning Council
Building 1, Suite 309
1317 Winewood Boulevard
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0700
(904) 488-4180

Multiple Sclerosis Society
266-B Villas Court
Tallahassee, FL 32302
(904) 386-1889

Muscular Dystrophy Association
1187 N. Gadsden Street
Tallahassee, FL 32303
(9040 681-6763

National Head Injury Foundation
Florida Association, Inc.
North Broward Medical Center
201 E. Sample Road
Pompano Beach, FL 33064
(305) 786-2400

Paralyzed Veteran's Association
of Florida
6200 N. Andrews Avenue
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33309
(305) 777-7822

Project Transition
203-B South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32308
(904) 681-3886

Rehabilitation Services Program
Department of Human Services
215-G Stone Building
Florida State University
Tallahassee, FL 32306
(904) 644-3854

Social Security Administration
227 North Bronough Street
Tallahassee, FL 32301
(904) 681-7139

United Cerebral Palsy of Florida
P.O. Box 6476
Tallahassee, FL 32301
(904) 878-2141